Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine
Maclean's
September 25, 2000 www.macleans.ca $4.50

THE OLYMPICS
The Sizzle in Sydney

BUSINESS
Convergence and the *Globe*

POLITICS
Election Fever

Ladies On Top

Canada's Barenaked Ladies—from suburban nerds to superstars



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Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine
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ROGERS MEDIA



Peter Bregg/Maclean's

66 Ladies on top

With their conquest of the U.S. market, Canada's Barenaked Ladies proved they were not a goofy pop-music blip. Now they are riding high with a new album, a documentary—and a new maturity in which they shed some of their irony and show a more serious, emotional side.

Features



Jason Chamberland/CP

18 Election fever

The House of Commons resumes sitting this week amid speculation that Prime Minister Jean Chrétien is still considering calling a national vote for this fall.

34 Converging on the *Globe*

BCE Inc. boss Jean Monty took control of *The Globe and Mail* as he and Thomson Corp.'s chiefs created a media powerhouse. But will it work?



Frank Gunn/CP



Ho/for I.F. Blobaby/AP

58 Sydney Sizzle

After a spectacular Olympic opening ceremony, Simon Whitfield buoyed Canada's medal hopes by winning gold in the men's triathlon.

From the

Editor



It's the lake, not the canoe

The dust jacket on Charles Sirois's book, *Organic Management*, describes him as Canada's "quintessential entrepreneur—bold and imaginative, ruthless and calculating." Sirois doesn't come across as ruthless during a visit to *Maclean's*, but he certainly is imaginative. And calculating? Probably. His Montreal-based company is about to become $720 million richer from the sale of its nine-per-cent share of long-distance carrier Teleglobe Inc. to BCE Inc. That is cash he can use to fuel his dreams of a truly wireless society through his privately owned Telesystem Ltd., a parent of the Fido cellphone.

Sirois, surveying the sea change in communications and media ownership, uses a nautical image. You can have the greatest vessel in the world, he notes, but when the lake recedes, the best boat will drop with all of the others. But if you pick a good lake, ah, the crummiest little craft will float on top, along with all the others. It's the lake, not the canoe, that matters.

The search for good lakes is on in earnest among the big fish of Canada's media and telecommunications powers. Last week, the telephone company took over the original national newspaper, *The Globe and Mail* (page 34). And Quebecor, the largest printer in the world, snatched the Vidéotron cable TV company in Montreal from the grasp of Ted Rogers, to go with its tabloid newspaper chain and Canoe Internet portal.

The morning line on Saturday—in *The Globe and Mail*—was that Rogers had been boxed in. He is, however, no slouch. His takeover of Maclean Hunter Ltd. in 1994 (including this publication) was the first major convergence deal in Canada after the Time Warner merger of 1989. Then, Rogers bought the Toronto Blue Jays earlier this month, the better to supply content to a cable sports channel he wants to own, his radio stations and possibly his wireless and cable companies.

The other major player on the scene is the Aspet family's Winnipeg-based CanWest Global Communications Corp., which, in the summer's other big deal, captured the 13 major Canadian papers of Conrad Black's Hollinger International Inc., along with a half-interest in the *National Post*.

It is not yet clear who the winners will be. Indeed, there has been precious little hard evidence that any of the megamergers to date, including AOL Time Warner, have generated returns greater than the companies could have achieved on their own. Sirois thinks the victor will be whoever can build a seamless bridge to the consumer, offering the services they actually want on whatever devices they own. What makes that dream possible is the digital age. *Gone with the Wind* is no longer just a piece of celluloid, it is "energy" that can be sent along a phone or cable line, or through the air.

Sirois is betting that the future is in wireless devices—cellphones and other gizmos not yet available. He dreams of the day soon when companies can sell a service or goods for pennies to a global market of billions. In that context, a 10-cent transaction could add up to a small fortune. That would be a really big lake. The question is, will customers want to jump in for the swim?

Robert Lewis

response@macleans.ca to comment on From the Editor

Newsroom Notes

With thanks

After 20 years as art director—and 25 with Maclean Hunter/Rogers—Nick Burnett is moving on. His departure from the helm will leave a major void. Burnett has defined the look and shape of *Maclean's* under three editors. He was at the helm during its most dramatic transition from quiet monthly to bold weekly.

Nick's decision to leave one of the most prized posts in Canadian magazine art direction comes as a surprise. But he has decided to develop his own design business. Happily, Burnett has agreed to make *Maclean's* his first customer. As of last week, he became creative director for special projects, including the 2001 *University and College Guide*.



Phil Snel/Maclean's

Nick Burnett

A person of Nick's ability and determination comes along too rarely. He played a seminal role in *Maclean's* transition from a monthly and its growth as a newsweekly. He has been there for the magazine in fair weather and foul, at the crack of dawn and at the end of the long days, always with one goal—making *Maclean's* a better magazine.

We are grateful to Nick for his professionalism, his commitment and, above all, his dedication. We are happy he is not leaving, but just moving across the hall.



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The Mail

Conservative agenda



What happened at *Maclean's*? An issue about social conservatives, without sarcasm and bias ("New might on the right," Cover, Sept. 11)? I was pleased to be able to finally read an article like Claire Hoy's "Pushing the pendulum." I felt as if he knew what I feel when I read many articles in your magazine.
Craig Polk, Oyen, Alta.

Not enough emphasis can be placed upon the crucial link between religion and an ordered, free society. Democracy and its inherent freedoms cannot exist without a measure of self-control, and this self-control is best taught within the confines of organized religion. It should really be no surprise that a proponent of individual freedoms in the true classical liberal tradition, like Stockwell Day, should come from a background of strict moral fortitude. Isn't it interesting that the new left, which pushes for more socialist economic policies and centralized government, both of which lead to fewer individual freedoms, is more often than not populated by the non-religious?
Elizabeth Kalbfleisch, Hamilton

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I think you are confusing the volume of the ideological rhetoric, which is substantially up, with the substance of the social-conservative platform, which remains vaporously thin. This is the last, dying gasp of a social anachronism that figures that if Canadians don't buy their narrow little agenda on a rational basis, then they had better shove it down our throats. Canada moved ahead of the social conservatives two or three generations ago. The future doesn't begin with a journey to the past.
Bob Delaney, Mississauga, Ont.

If readers ever had any doubts about *Maclean's* objectivity, the terms used to describe social conservatives ("no abortion," "no gun control" and "no gay marriage") on the Sept. 11 cover dispel any remaining uncertainty. Instead of using terms that reflect social conservatism's wider concerns, such as pro-life or family values, narrow, negative terms that represent liberal caricatures are imposed.
David R. Hodge, Cookshire, Que.

Your cover picture is very evocative. What I see is a good smack in the mouth for anyone who does not think the same way, vote the same way, believe the same way. And two smacks if you're a woman. Is this going to be out Canada? Thanks for the warning. By the time we hear the sound of crashing glass in the night and the gun butt banging on the door, it's too late.
Charles Cooper, Thornhill, Ont.

Claire Hoy hit it right on the button when he wrote, "And it's not just church people, it's all those Canadians who have been frustrated for years by feelings of powerlessness as they watched the elites tell them what to do and what to believe." I'm a Canadian, I live in Alberta, I believe in God, I don't attend church, I support Stockwell Day, I believe in free trade and I don't believe in big government. Does all that make me a redneck, right-wing, capitalistic, Christian zealot? No, I'm just one of Hoy's "frustrated" Canadians who wants a government that will tax less, spend less and let me express my views on major issues via referendums from time to time.
R. A. King, Calgary

Looking for trouble

How do I (and a bunch of other divorced middle-aged guys) get to this paradise on Fiji ("Trouble in paradise," World, Sept. 11)? As I read the article by Peter May, I thought I'd like to buy him a beer and get the scoop. Forget the occasional politics and hostage-takings here or there. Do I need a visa? How much does it cost him to live overlooking the tropical ocean? Does Filo, his much younger beautiful girlfriend with "dark hair tumbling down to her waist," have a sister? Give May all 60 pages of the next *Maclean's* to provide these important details and have your other writers take a week off.
Alec Lightstone, Thornhill, Ont.

May I suggest that there are many evangelical Christians who do not approve of the selective agenda of today's social conservatives. They oppose abortion, but they also oppose the very social programs, like subsidized day care and housing, that would help a single mother to keep and raise her child. They denounce the woman who chooses abortion, but rarely the man who fathers and then deserts his child. They condemn homosexuality, but are strangely silent when wealthy men dump their wives for younger women. Claire Hoy was taught that "the Ten Commandments were not written by a liberal." Does he really believe that conservatives are more moral than liberals, especially when it comes to the seventh commandment (Thou shalt not commit adultery)? The first wives or husbands of some prominent conservatives would find that highly amusing.
Dale Fisher, Calgary

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Voices of the West

I take exception to statements by Robert Lewis ("Only Mykytyshyn can help Clark," From the Editor, Aug. 28). He rated as "ugly" certain comments made by "prominent voices" (note the plural). Is challenging another premier "to stop asking for federal handouts" now a heinous crime? Does Ralph Klein have more than one voice? Does Klein speak on behalf of Stockwell Day (with Joe Clark the only other "westerner" named in the column)? I am personally offended by the remarks made by John Mykytyshyn, but you have further offended me by implying that Mykytyshyn is a westerner (he is not), that his comments are representative of westerners' views (they are not), that he is/was a Reformer (Myk has never been a Reform member) and that Day can't win until he "has driven the troglodytes [i.e., western Reformers—i.e., me and my ilk] from his ranks."
James Carson, Vancouver

Dated prose

In his column "Pat Carney's cabinet secrets" (Sept. 4), Allan Fotheringham writes that if he was asked to write an endorsement for my memoirs, *Trade Secrets*, to be published later this month by Key Porter Books, he would write "this dame has done more with her life than 97.2 per cent of Canadian males." In fact, Foth *did* write such an endorsement, but I personally took it off the book jacket because it reeks of stale-dated journalism. It is demeaning in the 21st century to refer to a woman of achievement as a "dame," unless it has a capital D, for which I don't qualify. The fact that he recycled this offensive description in his widely read *Maclean's* column shows he still doesn't get it.
Senator Pat Carney, Ottawa

Pat Carney was a bit of a misfit in the Mulroney cabinet. Possibly, that reflects some of the comments reported in Allan Fotheringham's column. Her reference to Brian Mulroney's relationship with me is simply wrong. He was always open and professional—as it should be between a prime minister and finance minister—even though I did wear knee pants on festive occasions.
Michael Wilson, Toronto

I may be, as Allan Fotheringham states, a "bureaucratic bully," but a "geisha"? Hard to fathom, except with a flight of imagination comparable to many that are reportedly in Pat Carney's memoir. In my observation, she was treated fairly and with unfailing generosity by a prime minister who deserves better, especially from one for whom he did so much.
Derek H. Burney, Toronto

Allan Fotheringham's column "A slap on a Royal wrist" (Aug. 7) has finally driven me to respond to the attacks on my character in the media. Fotheringham has gone beyond letting facts stand in the way of a good story. He has deliberately invented facts and told outright lies. In particular, there were four people involved in "juicing prices." The rest, including myself, were not involved and certainly did not condone it. I do not know what drove a few members of the equity group to affect high closings. Maybe it was the same failing that Fotheringham exhibited when he invented facts to sell your magazine.
Don Webster, Pickering, Ont.


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Over and Under Achievers

Why are these men smiling?

All politics, all the time. The PM moves ahead! Day soaks his own head! Clark loses two heads! And George W. Bush—who's the wrong head?



Day

Jean Chrétien: Triple-threat man. He cuts a health-care deal with the provinces, swipes two MPs from the Tories, *and* **Paul Martin** appears set to stick around. Just *don't* try to tell the PM to quit while he's ahead.

Stockwell Day: He steals a page from PM's Look-How-Buff-I-Am playbook and shows off on Jet Ski in skintight bodysuit. Stop this trend before **Joe Clark** hops on.



Bouchard

Joe Clark: He wins byelection but loses two MPs, and his party president quits amid claims of treachery. In short, it's still the same old s-Tory.

Lucien Bouchard: Says federal-provincial unity on health-care deal makes him "very happy." So will an apple a day keep sovereignty away?

Jean Charest: His backroom advice to Mike Harris helped make health deal happen. Coming next: Bouchard seeks advice from **Dalton McGuinty**!

George W. Bush: He denies suggestions that his repeated malaprops are the result of dyslexia. He's actually just practising how to have a conversation with the PM.

Web Watch

Blame Canada

Searching cyberspace for an intelligent critique of Canadian politics? Or maybe you're looking to vent frustrations with Toronto traffic or Montreal language wars in an online forum? *Don't* bother to go to *www.vancouversucks.com*, *www.torontosucks.com*, or *www.montrealsucks.com*. Those domain names all lead to one Web site: the U.S.-based *www.sucks.com*. That site makes no mention of Canada on its main page—and none of its discussion groups have anything to do with Canada. The only consolation for those looking for new proof of American imperialism are a few cross-border barbs—grammatical flaws and all. Among them: Canada is "a country that a majority of its land mass only sees the sun a couple months out of the year," and has "the dumbest accents of all."

Another American-run site, *www.canadasucks.com*, at least offers some straight-up Canada-bashing. The owner of this one—which is unrelated to the other group—offers a tactical map of "The Invasion of Canada 1775 to 1776" dating back to the American Revolution. The site's plea: "Invade Canada. All Canadian citizens should crawl across the border to Washington D.C. and beg for asylum." C'mon, all you Canada bashers, you can do better than *that*.

Derek Chezzi



Joe Clark wins a byelection but loses two Quebec MPs to the Liberals

Tiger's tale by the numbers:

These numbers help tell the story of both ***Tiger Woods'*** *stunning Sept. 10 victory at the Bell Canadian Open in Oakville, Ont., and the manner in which he dominates golf.*

2 Number of golfers to win the Canadian Open, British Open and U.S. Open in a single year (**Lee Trevino** in 1971 and now Woods)

9 Tournament wins this year—the most on PGA Tour in 50 years

218 Yards from the fairway bunker—over the water—to the pin on Tiger's amazing 6-iron approach to the 18th hole, solidifying his one-stroke victory at the Canadian Open

360 Tiger's longest drive of the Open—on the par-5 18th on the second day

264 Lowest four-day score in the 22 years the Open has been held at Glen Abbey

12 **19** Shots under par at the U.S. Open and British Open—both tournament records



Woods: key figure is his number 1

112 Shots under par for seven tournaments this summer

24 Age and his career wins

12.2 Millions of dollars in tournament earnings this year

21.9 Millions of dollars won in the past two years—more than any golfer has won in a career

1 Woods' world ranking. Also his rank in the categories of scoring, putting, eagles and birdies

Michael Snider

Overbites

"The table was set and along came the Prime Minister and took away the roast beef."

—**Alan Lenczner**, lawyer for **Conrad Black**, complains to the Ontario Court of Appeal over the manner in which **Jean Chrétien** blocked the media magnate from receiving a peerage from Britain for which he had been recommended.

"Having glimpsed a little of Australia through the Olympics, we might become sufficiently enamored to begin at last to take some note of it. It is certainly an exciting prospect. Then—who knows?—we might even begin to pay attention to Canada."

—Author **Bill Bryson**, writing in *The Wall Street Journal*, bemoans Americans' indifference to people and events beyond their borders.

Overview

The play's the thing—and cash

Does the kid with the richest dad get to play quarterback?

Remember that old saw about how "time is money"? It's never more true than in the case of children participating in recreational sports. A Statistics Canada study released last week shows that 73 per cent of children who come from families with incomes of $80,000 or more were active in organized sports in 1998. By contrast, only 49 per cent of kids who come from households with a total income of less than $40,000 took part in such sports in the same year. Overall, about 2.2 million (54 per cent) of children aged 5 to 14 regularly played some form of organized sports. Statistics Canada also found that 86 per cent of children played organized sports when their parents were themselves involved as a volunteer. Soccer remains the No. 1 choice of children aged 5 to 14, with 31 per cent of all athletically active children in Canada enrolled in the world's most popular sport—which is also one of the cheapest to play. Proof that money can't buy *everything*.



John Intini

Advertisement

Red Wine Grapes

Purple Juice Grapes – Is There a Difference?

You've heard it dozens of times from as many sources – drinking a glass of red wine a day is good for your heart. There are, however, many people out there who won't drink a glass of red wine every day and their reasons are varied. Some feel wasteful uncorking a whole bottle to enjoy a single glass. Others simply don't want to drink alcohol every day.

For those people purple grape juice is an ideal way to regularly get the goodness of grapes. In fact purple grape juice has recently become part of The Heart & Stroke Foundation's Health Check program. And since Welch's is 100% purple grape juice, an average size glass even gives you two servings of fruit a day. Something most people need more of anyway.

Red wine will always be the most romantic way to benefit from grapes. However a large plastic 1.82 Litre bottle of purple grape juice will stay fresh in your refrigerator for weeks, making it ideal for daily use. And a glass of purple grape juice at the breakfast table is probably less likely to raise eyebrows than a glass of red wine.

Brought to you by Welch's

PASSAGES



Died: Abstract artist **Yves Gaucher**, 66, painted mostly with oils and acrylics, but was also a collagist and printmaker. Born in Montreal, Gaucher attended the city's L'Ecole des beaux arts for three years, but his self-assured and often obstinate manner led to his being expelled for insubordination. Although he kept his studio in Montreal, his work was rarely shown there—it was exhibited in Europe, New York and Ontario. His monochromatic paintings, often inspired by aronal music, sold for approximately $15,000 apiece, although he was known to ask as much as $100,000 for large canvases. After injuring his shoulder while on vacation in Bali three years ago, Gaucher had to scale back his work. He died of throat cancer in Montreal.

Died: Former Montreal *Gazette* editor **Edgar Andrew Collard**, 89, wrote the longest-running editorial column in the country. In 1940, he began sending the paper unsolicited pieces, which it published without paying him. Two years later, he began work in the paper's library. In 1944, he wrote the first of his All Our Yesterdays editorials, which dealt with the people and history of Montreal. He filed his final column in August on the 56th anniversary of its debut. The *Gazette*'s editor-in-chief from 1953 to 1971, he won four National Newspaper Awards for editorial writing. Collard, who suffered a stroke last year, died in Ottawa.

Married. Caroline Mulroney, 26, the only daughter of former Progressive Conservative prime minister **Brian Mulroney**, married **Andrew Lapham** in an elaborate ceremony at Montreal's Saint-Léon de Westmount Church. The American-born bridegroom, 28, is the oldest child of **Lewis Lapham**, editor of New York City-based *Harper's* magazine. He runs his own e-commerce company in New York, where Caroline Multoney is in her last year at New York University's law school. The two met several years ago while working on Wall Street.

Died: Ben Wicks, 73, often joked about his inability to draw, but the cheeky brand of humour found in his widely syndicated cartoons helped earn him the Order of Canada in 1986. The British-born Toronto artist received his big break with the American magazine *The Saturday Evening Post* after fabricating letters of reference to support his work. His cartoon strip, *The Outcasts*, appeared in 52 Canadian newspapers, while 100 U.S. papers picked up his single cartoon. The self-taught artist also published 43 books. He died of cancer in his Toronto home.

Appointed: **Shannon Kleibrink**, 31, is the new skip for Canada's 1998 gold-medal curling team. Kleibrink takes over from **Sandra Schmirler**, who led the team at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, but died in March at 36 after a six-month struggle with cancer. Kleibrink, from Calgary, will soon begin practising for the 2001 Olympic trials.

Fired: Indiana University basketball coach and notorious hothead **Bobby Knight** was forced to leave his 29-year position with the Hoosiers after an altercation with student **Kent Harvey**. Knight, 59, was on a school-imposed probation for past anger outbursts when he lost his temper with Harvey—he grabbed the freshman's arm and lectured him for being disrespectful. Beloved by many players and students, Knight received a warm farewell from a crowd of about 6,000 last week, amid bitter protests over his firing. He is expected to coach again somewhere—either in college or the NBA.

Died: Maria Teresa Salsachs-Rowe, the wife of International Olympic Committee president **Juan Antonio Samaranch**, stayed home in Barcelona because of a long illness while Samaranch attended the Games in Sydney, Australia. He left after the opening ceremonies, but did not reach home before she died, aged 67.



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Bruce Myers

Why I'll become a priest

"What would possess you to give up a promising career in broadcast journalism to go back to school and train to become a priest?"

Good question—and one I've been asked by bemused friends, family and colleagues more times than I can count since deciding some 10 months ago to do precisely that. And for someone who up until now has made his livelihood talking on the radio, I've found myself struggling to come up with words capable of articulating this thing they dub "My Calling."

I can easily forgive people for thinking I'm nuts. At 27, I'm trading a cool job that's secure and high-profile and pays well in a growing industry, for one that's the complete opposite of those things. "Cool" isn't a word used to describe clergy. Job security and salary depend on how full the collection plate is. And with few exceptions, the church is hardly what you'd call a growth industry. The denomination into which I would be ordained, the Anglican Church of Canada, is facing possible financial ruin due to lawsuits stemming from abuse suffered by aboriginal children in church-run residential schools.

Truth be told, I'm still not sure how I got to this point. I was raised in a Christian—but not what you'd call religious—home. I said my prayers, went to Sunday school, attended youth groups and, like just about every other teenager, I eventually left the church.

But the church never left me.

For as long as I can remember, there has been (I don't know how else to describe it) a tug somewhere inside. As a child, it was a gentle pull on the sleeve, felt when I heard Bible stories for the first time. In adolescence, the pull grew into a more insistent yank when, say, I'd hear a particularly gifted preacher. Even when I left the church for a couple of years, the pull was still there. By this year, it was strong enough that I left my job reporting on politics in Quebec City to enter the Anglican seminary in Montreal, where I've begun studies.

My arrival at this point has been relatively slow and gradual. There has been no Road-to-Damascus conversion experience on my journey. It has been more a series of gentle revelations and affirmations that my talents are intended for a purpose greater than covering the most recent tempest in a teapot on Parliament Hill or reading the morning headlines between the latest hits from Britney Spears and The Moffatts. Though perhaps less spectacular than some others' callings, I've felt God's real presence throughout.

Since coming out of the ecclesiastical closet, I've been encouraged by the number of men and women I've met who are in the same boat: sometimes inexplicably drawn to the ministry, people who have fought it and realized it's a fight they couldn't win, people who see the crying need to fill a growing spiritual void and spread a badly needed message of hope. Many of them make my leap look unremarkable. A case in point: the recently consecrated Episcopal bishop of Los Angeles, who used to play centre for the Denver Broncos.

Perhaps that's also part of my calling: reminding people it's "normal" to have faith and that being a faithful Christian (or Jew, or Muslim, or whatever) doesn't mean being a zealot; reminding people that we eat, drink, party, swear, love, hurt, work like everyone else; reminding people that, as in my case, we deliver the news, good and bad. Or, in the case of the Lord Bishop of L.A., deliver a good tackle.

Bruce Myers's friends admire him very much. Guest submissions may be sent to overture@macleans.ca or faxed to (416) 596-7730. We cannot respond to all queries.

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Raising the Roof Down Under



Peter Bregg/Maclean's

From left, Glenroy Gilbert, Bruny Surin, Trevino Betty and Donovan Bailey, members of Canada's 4 X 100 relay team

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Anthony Wilson-Smith

Life on the crime beat

In the early 1980s, investigative crime reporter Michel Auger spent a couple of years working for the CBC program *the fifth estate*. So, for a couple of months, did I: in my final year of university, Brian McKenna—the filmmaker who was then a Montreal-based producer for the show—gave me part-time work as a researcher/gofer. On the few occasions that Auger came into the office, he was polite but preoccupied, and spent most of his time meeting with McKenna, or murmuring, in a voice not much louder than a whisper, into the telephone to persons unknown. On occasion, when I would ask where Auger was or what he was up to, McKenna—no stranger to intrigue himself—would grin, and say, "Don't worry, kid—he's out there earning his salary." He sure was: the two produced a steady diet of scoops and slice-of-life pieces about the city's seamy underside. They didn't always make friends in the process.

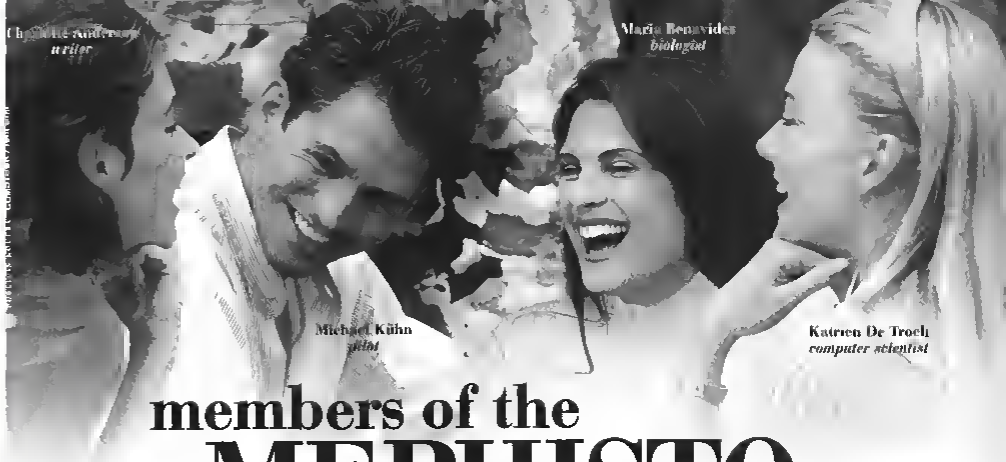
So it came as a shock last week—but in a sense, no surprise—to hear of an attempt on Auger's life. He took five bullets in the back while in the parking lot of his employer, *Le Journal de Montréal*. With typical efficiency, Auger nonetheless managed to call in news of his own shooting to 911, and then gave police the phone number of his next-of-kin. It's not clear whether the murder attempt came on account of things already written, or other stuff he plans to write. Auger is typically up to so many things that it's impossible to keep track.

Although it's often a mistake to generalize, there's a case to be made that Montreal has the richest, most developed tradition of high-profile crime reporting of any Canadian city. Its most obvious parallel, in fact, is New York City, where crime-beat reporters become celebrities in their own right. The Montreal-based weekly tabloid *Allô Police*, with its heavy diet of grisly crime stories, sells hundreds of thousands of copies, and while Auger's paper, the tabloid *Journal*, isn't as racy as it once was, it still, on a good day, makes its sister tab *The Toronto Sun* seem as grey as *The New York Times*. Back in the 1970s and '80s, radio reporter Claude Poirier seemed to make the news as often as he reported it: he was called in more than two dozen times to mediate hostage-taking incidents, usually at the criminal's request. Poirier, who favoured gold jewelry and elegant pearl-grey suits, also persuaded more than 80 criminals to turn themselves in—once, with a kidnapper, by proposing that they have a glass of cognac together. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau, who today is a Parti Québécois MNA and speaker of Quebec's national assembly, so upset key members of Montreal's underworld that in 1973, someone walked into the newsroom of his paper, *Le Devoir*, pulled out a pistol and fired a shot that hit him in the arm. And Steve Kowch, who now lives a more benign life as program director of Toronto's CFRB radio, began crime reporting at age 17 in the late 1960s, and became something of a legend before the age of 25. In a series for the Montreal *Gazette* on gun training, he revealed that some police opened beer bottles with the sights of their .38 specials, while others stuffed candy wrappers and matches into shotgun barrels. Steve mastered the beat despite the fact he was so young, he once confessed ruefully, that his mother called an editor to "ask him to keep me inside: she didn't want me seeing things I shouldn't."

In any newsroom, crime reporters are a different breed of cat: they're more of a throwback to the hard-living way reporters were depicted half a century or more ago in movies like *The Front Page*. Reporters who cover cops and crooks often take on similar coloration—they talk quickly and use lots of wise-guy slang, dress even more loudly than they speak, and tilt aggressively to the right on law-and-order issues. Auger differs from that stereotype. Carefully spoken, grey-haired, a subdued dresser, he's a devout family man who likes to spend his downtime beekeeping and making honey. Unlike a lot of reporters whose main sources are cops, he works the other side of the street just as assiduously, and is renowned for never betraying or revealing a source. A two-part series he just finished on the Hells Angels motorcycle gang and its efforts to control Montreal's drug trade, for example, was filled with information from sources in the gang.

It all sounds like the stuff of a Hollywood movie or TV show—until you remember that there's no director around to yell "Cut!" at dangerous points. Hang around on the dark side too long, and there's a risk of being seduced. In the 1970s, the *Journal* fired a reporter who planted a false story to assist a local gang—and the reporter went on to become a member of the gang before eventually turning police informant. An English-language reporter who wrote some terrific stuff on the city's crime scene in the '80s eventually lost his own way, got strung out on cocaine, was arrested, assaulted a cop and went to jail. Those who don't succumb face other dangers. Someone like Auger could never fully relax: his phone number has been unlisted for years and his driver's licence gives only his address at the newspaper. He has long made a point, following advice from the police, of taking different routes to work to make himself harder to track.

That makes for a pretty isolated existence—but the paradox is that to be effective, crime reporters have to keep hanging out amid the people most likely to do them harm. Journalists are often admiringly described by peers as "tough" or "brave" simply because of a willingness to ask CEOs or politicians probing questions. But Auger reminds you of what those words really mean.



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Ready to Rumble

As the House resumes, all eyes are really on the looming election

By Juhan Beltrame



Chrétien flanked by new MPs, St-Jacques and Price' defection

In the game of image politics, Stockwell Day set the bar a notch higher last week—possibly one notch over the top. Fresh from his runaway triumph in the Okanagan/Cocquihalla byelection, the body-conscious Canadian Alliance leader offered up a striking image of the man who would be Canada's next prime minister. Skimming across the waters of British Columbia's Lake Okanagan on a Yamaha Wave Runner, Day skidded onto shore decked out in a skintight wet suit and proclaimed to the assembled media that he meant to practise politics differently. There were guffaws in the Ottawa offices of the Prime Minister. "I can promise you, Jean Chrétien will never do a scrum in spandex," chuckled Françoise Ducros, the Prime Minister's communications director, whose own boss is no slouch at the action photo op. Tory Leader Joe Clark, who also won a House of Commons seat last week in the Nova Scotia riding of Kings/Hants, took himself out of the most-macho-politician contest as well, saying Day should rename his Canadian Alliance the "costume party."

But behind the ribbing, many are clearly worried. With the resumption of Parliament this week, concern among Liberal strategists mounted that the attention-gobbling Alliance leader could become a star in the House and upset the governing party's carefully laid plans for re-election. By week's end, rumours swirled around the capital that Prime Minister Jean Chrétien had again put a fall election back in play. A Liberal source told *Maclean's* that some of the Prime Minister's key strategists are telling him poll numbers are unlikely to go higher, and with last week's health accord in place, and the Tories in disarray, the time is right to strike. A quick election opens the Liberals to charges of opportunism, the election hawks concede, but there is equal risk that a winter of high energy prices will sour the electorate's mood by spring. "I still say a spring election is more likely, but I'm not counting out going early," the Liberal official said.

Can Day make a big splash in national politics, and can Clark rescue his disintegrating party? The true test begins after this week's swearing in of the two in the Commons. The Tory leader would seem to have the advantage of experience. He has sat a total of 16 years as leader of the Opposition, prime minister and senior member of Brian Mulroney's cabinet—where he was generally acknowledged to be an effective performer. Despite 14 years in the Alberta legislature, including the last three as treasurer, Day is a rookie to the blood sport played in the nation's capital. Acknowledging his greenness, Day took pains to ratchet down expectations, allowing he "might make some mistakes."

Experience, though, only counts if you have a chance to play. And with two highly publicized Tory defections to the Liberals last week, Clark will take his place in the Commons at the head of a greatly diminished Conservative party. When the House gets down to business, the Liberals will have 159 seats, the Alliance 58, the Bloc Québécois 44, while the NDP will have 20 MPs and the Tories 15. As the leader of the fifth-largest party, Clark will likely only get, at best, two chances to grill the government during question period—and only after all the other leaders.

Day's advantage, besides the exposure of asking the first questions every day, is the much larger caucus and research budget that comes with official Opposition status. But because he is the newcomer, all eyes will be on him, which brings both pitfalls and opportunity, observes Darrell Bricker of the Angus Reid polling firm. "For good or bad," Bricker says, "there's no second chance to make a first impression in politics. This will be a period of definition for him."

Last week, Day anticipated that his "honeymoon" period in the House would last about eight seconds. Even that may be overly optimistic. With an election looming, and with the Liberals seeking a rare third majority, the government is eager to attack the Alliance at a time when Day is trying to present himself as the right man for the new millennium. Chrétien has been practising his lines since the Liberal caucus meetings in late August, when he blasted Day for his anti-abortion views and labelled him "Blockwell Day" for seeking an "unholy alliance" by courting members of the separatist BQ. The Liberals were also quick to pounce on Day's suggestion last week that the House do away with the "sham" of Friday sittings, when the leaders seldom appear. "The next time you switch jobs, go ask your leader for every Friday off and see how far that's going to get you," mocked Liberal House leader Don Boudria.



Day, a promise to practise politics differently

The Prime Minister has shown no greater deference to Clark, confirming the defection of David Price and Diane St-Jacques—two-thirds of the Tories' Quebec caucus—in a congratulatory phone call about an hour before the embattled leader was to address supporters after his byelection victory. Clark bitterly called the timing "absolutely offensive." But, in reality, Chrétien is Clark's political adversary and owes him no favours. Clark's anger was more logically directed at his own party's president, Peter Van Loan, whom Clark accused of seeking to round up support for a leadership review. Although Van Loan initially issued a statement denying the charge, Clark was not totally convinced. "Certainly something was going on and it was extremely unhelpful," he said in an interview. By late last week, Van Loan had resigned, but Clark's troubles were not resolved as fresh reports circulated that new acting president Jacques Léger had also been sounding out members about the leader.

The Tories still harbour illusions of being a national alternative to the Liberals. But the Sept. 11 defections—Clark earlier lost his sole Ontario MP, Jim Jones, to the Alliance—may have damaged the party beyond repair. Liberal strategists once believed that if they propped up the Tories, Clark's party would split the right-wing vote with the Alliance. But as last week's raid on the Tory ranks showed, times have

Up to 70 Liberal caucus members begged Paul Martin to stay on

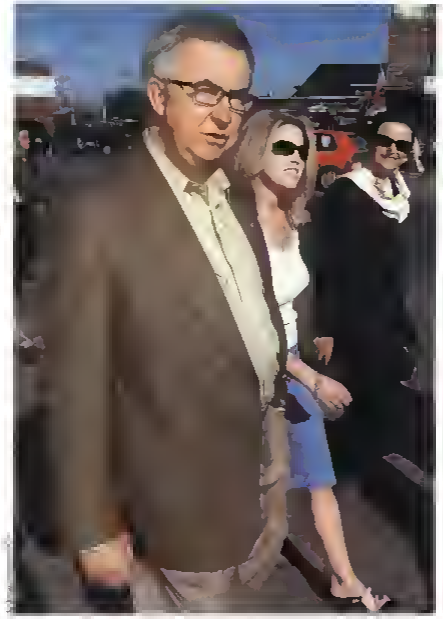
changed. Liberal insiders now argue that the 10 per cent or so of Canadians who still plan to vote Conservative are just as likely to gravitate to the Liberals as to the Alliance should the Tories disintegrate. "As the Tories crumble," said one Liberal official, "are we going to pick up their crumbs? Yes."

By contrast, the 159-member Liberal caucus troops back to Ottawa this week in a state of relative equanimity. The ongoing leadership rivalry between Chrétien and Paul Martin has been set aside until at least after the election, with the finance minister deciding to remain the assistant captain on the team. One Martin loyalist said up to 70 members of caucus "begged him" to stay on for the good of the party, although he added that the relationship between Martin and Chrétien "was lousy to begin with—now it's worse." But sources say the pressure on Chrétien to retire will almost certainly build again, should the Canadian Alliance's polling numbers begin inching up to the 30-per-cent range this fall—and especially if the party is reduced to minority status after the election. "I think our numbers will dip, but I'm afraid it will happen when we're two weeks into the election campaign," the Martin loyalist lamented.

On the policy front, the Liberals last week erected a load-bearing pillar for their re-election platform by inking a health-care deal with the premiers (page 22). The agreement restores most of the cuts to federal transfers made in the mid-1990s, increasing payouts to provinces for health and education from the current $15.5 billion to $18.3 billion next year, and rising to $21.1 billion in fiscal year 2005-2006. Despite Chrétien's veiled threats to run on the issue if no deal was reached, it was not a strong one for the Liberals, says Walter Robinson, federal director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. "How do you run on saving health care when you're the one that acted like Jack Kevorkian by pulling the plug on funding in the first place?" he asked. Almost unnoticed was an agreement with the provinces that pumps a further $2.2 billion into early-childhood development.

Canadians can also look for more tidying up of outstanding issues in the coming weeks. Among them a new immigration bill to crack down on people-smuggling, measures to protect endangered species; tougher penalties for youth offenders; and legislation to reform financial institutions. Moreover, Chrétien is widely expected to shuffle his cabinet soon, and further defuse the grants scandal at Human Resources Development Canada by splitting up the unwieldy department to lighten the load on Jane Stewart, the department's weakened minister.

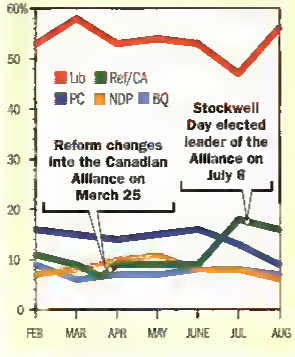
But the highlight of the fall session, at least for the government, comes in November when Martin delivers his mid-year economic update. In the past, he has used the occasion to boast about how well the Liberals have managed the country's finances. The statement will give the government an opportunity to test the water by shedding new light on further tax relief and program spending. This year's update is likely to foreshadow spending for infrastructure projects, foreign aid, and research and development, all to be finally decided in February's budget. With an $8.2-billion surplus in just the first three months of this fiscal year, said one government official, "we're flush—there's money to do all sorts of things." And that may trump image, even Wave Runners and wet suits, when the time comes for Canadians to choose the next government. m



Clark, daughter Catherine and wife Maureen McTeer: bitter

In Popular Opinion

Each month, Gallup pollsters asked about 1,000 Canadians how they would vote if an election was imminent. The results:



Source: Gallup Canada Inc.



Spending the health money

As dollars flow into the system, workers on the front lines wonder how long it will take to make a difference

By John Geddes

Dr. Phillip Malpass begins his day on Sept. 11 by attending a 7:30 a.m. meeting of Nelson, B.C., community leaders on what to do about the town's decaying, understaffed, badly equipped hospital. By that hour, three time zones away in Ottawa, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and the provincial premiers are deep into final bargaining on terms for pumping billions more into the whole Canadian health system. Malpass has an intense interest in the outcome, but little time to follow the politicians' progress through the day's newscasts. He rushes from his morning meeting on Nelson's dream of a new hospital to another gruelling day at the old one. Six serious new cases need his attention, from heart attacks to pneumonia. Malpass doesn't finish work until 9 p.m. By then, he has heard that Ottawa and the provinces have a deal—one that gives him hope that money will flow Nelson's way. "We've got a facility here," he says, "that's crumbling around us."



Malpass outside Nelson's Kootenay Lake Regional Hospital: long workdays, antiquated equipment and a vow to leave if there is no firm decision to build a new hospital soon

Sometimes over the past few years it has seemed that the grand medicare experiment might simply crumble on its foundations. So, many Canadians greeted last week's agreement in Ottawa as a breakthrough. In all, the federal government promised $23.4 billion in new health funding over five years. But too many questions remained unanswered for beleaguered doctors like Malpass to celebrate without reservations. Just how would the provinces use the new money? How soon would new equipment and staff arrive to shorten waiting times for tests and treatment? Federal Health Minister Allan Rock will meet his provincial counterparts early next month to start working on the details to put the pact that Chrétien and the premiers signed into practice. But Rock says the bickering between the two levels of government is over. "We have overcome the jurisdictional squabbles," he told *Maclean's*. "We have more money and a common plan."

On the question of more money, at least, the first ministers reached a settlement. Chrétien promised that Ottawa will be handing over $21.1 billion a year to the provinces under the Canada health and social transfer by 2005-2006, up from $15.5 billion this fiscal year. As well, he earmarked $1 billion for new medical equipment, $500 million for information technology and $800 million to bring more order and efficiency to the delivery of so-called primary care—the doctors, clinics and emergency departments where patients first seek help. But the second half of Rock's claim—that the two levels of government share a common plan—may overstate the case. The system's worst symptoms remain all too evident: weeks, even months, of waiting for some tests and treatments, overcrowded hospitals and long delays to receive attention in emergency rooms, especially in flu season. When it comes to prescribing exactly where governments should reinvest, though, there is no clear consensus.

Studies have been maddeningly inconclusive. A major 1998 Health Canada report on waiting lists found them so "capriciously organized [and] poorly monitored" that it was impossible to pinpoint where the need is truly greatest. Any patient who has spent sleepless nights waiting for a magnetic resonance imaging scan, or a worried parent who has sat for hours in an emergency waiting room with a feverish kid has an idea of where new money could be spent. The danger, warns John McGurran, director of the Edmonton-based Western Canada Waiting List Project, is that governments will merely throw money at those politically damaging problems without addressing systemic failings. "It's all based on impressions and subjective data," he says. "And that's the issue. Are we just going to turn on the spending tap, or is there going to be better management?"

McGurran's project, a $2.2-million federally funded research effort launched in 1998, aims to make that better management possible. It is developing standardized forms to help doctors determine which patients get first crack at some in-demand treatments: cataract surgery, children's mental health services, hip and knee replacements, MRI scanning and general surgery. Using a concept that could be applied to many more medical services, patients would be rated on a set of questions including the severity of pain and likelihood of their condition deteriorating. The results would then determine their position on a list of patients needing the same services.

Rock believes such an approach would not only make waiting lists fairer but could also standardize practices enough to make accurate national comparisons possible. "We have to be able to compare waiting times for knee surgery in Halifax and Victoria, and know that we're not misleading people," he said. In fact, the Prime Minister and premiers agreed to begin reporting comparisons of that sort in two years. Besides speed and quality of service, they will also compare such indicators as low birth weight and changes in life expectancy.

But comprehensive, clear-cut national comparisons are a long way off. Confusion—sometimes near panic—at the provincial or health region level is more common. Last week brought alarming revelations that breast cancer patients at Toronto's Princess Margaret Hospital were waiting up to seven months for radiation therapy after surgery. On closer examination, it turned out that the long delays involved patients who, for various reasons, chose not to take an opportunity to travel elsewhere for treatment. Because Toronto's facilities cannot meet the demand, some patients opt for expenses-paid trips to Thunder Bay, Ont., or such U.S. centres as Buffalo and Cleveland for faster radiation therapy. Why can't everyone be treated in Toronto? Surprisingly, government cutbacks are not being blamed. "There's a shortage of radiation technicians throughout the industrialized world," explains Princess Margaret's vice-president, Dr. Robert Bell.

While some reforms will depend on what the new information gathering reveals, spending on new medical equipment will begin swiftly. The agreement commits Ottawa to provide $1 billion over two years for the purchase of MRI scanners, bedside lifters that help nurses move patients and other much-needed hardware. Another $500 million is dedicated to upgrading computer information systems in hospitals and clinics. But getting new machines is the easy part. A tougher challenge, most experts say, will be recruiting and training the extra doctors, nurses and technicians that the system needs to function efficiently. And it will be up to the provinces to decide how to use the pumped-up federal transfer payments to pursue sought-after professionals.

The prospect of more money for hardware and the professionals to run it sounds like a dream to Malpass. At Nelson's Kootenay Lake Regional Hospital—46 years old and aging ungracefully—there are no high-tech scanners, just an old X-ray machine, and never enough nurses and doctors. Malpass, 51, has been in Nelson since 1978, but vows to get out if there is no firm decision to build a new hospital soon. The town of nearly 10,000 has rallied around the idea of raising funds locally, but the province would have to contribute, too. After last week's deal with Ottawa, Malpass says, "Now they've got to step up to the table and do this thing." Like many others on medicine's front lines, he sounds eager to believe that Canadian health care has turned a corner to better days. m

WHAT THE PROVINCES GOT



Peter Bregg/Maclean's

- $21.1 billion over five years in increased general transfer payments from Ottawa for health and social programs
- $1 billion over two years earmarked for medical equipment including MRIs and other diagnostic machines
- $500 million to upgrade computerized information-gathering technology in hospitals and clinics
- $800 million over four years for innovations in the delivery of primary care (when a patient first seeks help from doctors and other health professionals)

Cleaning up the leftovers

The Liberals want to head into the next federal election with a clean slate

By John Geddes in Ottawa

Like kids going back to school with new pencils and pristine pink erasers, MPs like to think of the fall opening of a new House of Commons sitting as a fresh start. But for some prominent Liberals, there are unfinished assignments left over from last spring's semester. A few powerful cabinet ministers, including some who will be called upon to play key roles in the election expected next year, need to wrap up old business on issues from protecting endangered wildlife to prosecuting teenage criminals. Liberal campaign strategists do not want to carry the dead weight of stalled bills and detailed initiatives into an election season, so the pressure is on to turn these problem files into winners—or walk away from them.

Among the most potentially explosive election issues is crime. Canadian Alliance Leader Stockwell Day has served notice he will make law and order a core platform theme. The cornerstone of the Liberals' claim to be taking action in this area is the Youth Criminal Justice Act that Justice Minister Anne McLellan announced on March 11, 1999. But the new law, now being studied by a Commons committee, is under heavy fire from the Alliance, some provincial governments and outspoken victims' rights groups. McLellan's bill does take steps that could be sold as get-tough provisions, such as dropping to 14 from 16 the age at which judges can decide to sentence violent young offenders to adult prison terms. But the Alliance calls for making those adult sentences mandatory. And Bloc Quebecois MPs have held up the bill at the committee stage, arguing it intrudes on Quebec's jurisdiction. McLellan is preparing to tinker, but not retreat. "We're going to move this through [the House] quickly,



Tom Hanson ©

Anderson, the endangered burrowing owl (below), an unfinished agenda

quickly, quickly," said one of her aides.

On the environment, the Liberals hope to go on the offensive in an election. The party's polling firm, Pollara Inc., recently found that 45 per cent of Canadians say environmental issues will play a very important role in how they vote. To exploit that mood, the governing party needs a track record to tout. Environment Minister David Anderson tabled his most ambitious new law, the Species at Risk Act, on April 11. Anderson had to tread carefully, since environment is a shared jurisdiction with the provinces. His law aims to protect endangered species first through voluntary measures, cooperating with provinces and private landowners whenever possible. "But where other measures fail," he warned, "the federal government will step in with prohibitions on the destruction of critical habitat on federal, provincial and private lands."



Imagestate

That failed to satisfy many environmental groups. A backlash has been sustained by a coalition called the Canadian Endangered Species Campaign. Its key criticism: even though independent scientists would evaluate which species are at risk, the federal cabinet would decide whether to take action to protect them. A "report card" released last month by four environmental groups assigned Anderson's bill a D-minus, slamming it for leaving too much room for "political discretion." Anderson is expected to appear before a Commons committee to defend his bill—and propose at least minor changes—as early as this week. But his critics should not expect too much. "People who want fundamental changes should know we're just not going to do that," said one official.

Other old Liberal projects once considered high priorities are considered expendable. Late last year, Health Minister Allan Rock's staff was working overtime to prepare a sweeping "reproductive technology" law. It was to have done everything from banning the sale of human eggs and sperm to regulating embryo research. But wrangling with the provinces and the medical community held Rock back. Now, his officials concede privately the initiative is all but dead. "Right now," said one Liberal strategist, "reproductive technology is not on top of anybody's hit parade." With an election in the wind, a hit is whatever is judged likely to sound catchy on the campaign trail. m

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Walkerton gears up

Ontario Superior Court Justice Warren Winkler gave lawyers in the Walkerton class-action suit until Oct. 30 to file arguments before he sets a hearing date. Last May, six people died and 2,000 people were made sick from *E. coli* contamination of the town's water supply. Meanwhile, more than 40 applicants representing 80 groups and 200 individuals were granted standing at a public inquiry. The provincial New Democratic Party, which wanted to dispute Conservative allegations that NDP water policies had caused the tragedy, was one of the few groups denied standing.

Abandoned in Halifax

Hundreds of passengers and crew were stranded in Halifax after two luxury cruise ships—The Rembrandt and Sea Breeze—were seized for unpaid bills. The Rembrandt was allowed to leave harbour the next day. Florida-based Premier Cruise Lines, which also stranded passengers in ports in Mexico and the Bahamas, said it will fly everyone back to their ports of origin.

A macabre discovery

Police in Ontario uncovered the headless remains of Jennifer Zumach, 21, in a remote wooded area near Orangeville, a town 58 km northwest of Toronto. On Sept. 6, Zumach's partner, James Randall, 31, of Orangeville, was arrested and charged with her murder after police stopped him on his motorcycle—and discovered that he was carrying Zumach's head wrapped in plastic. Randall had reported Zumach missing in January, 1999. Police are also looking into the death of Karen Randall, his former wife, who died in 1992. She was thought to have committed suicide.

Doctors protest conditions

In an escalating dispute with the provincial government, doctors in small communities across British Columbia resigned their hospital privileges. They said more money is needed to recruit and retain physicians in rural areas. B.C. Premier Ujjal Dosanjh recalled the legislature at the weekend to approve new health spending, but doctors said it was not enough.



Chuck Stoody, CP

A tragic ferry collision in British Columbia

A B.C. Ferry Corp. vessel collided with an 11-m pleasure boat, leaving a man from Washington state dead and his former wife seriously injured. Both had been aboard the smaller craft. It had remained in a busy channel near Victoria, even though the 19,000-tonne super-ferry, Spirit of Vancouver Island, had repeatedly sounded its horn. Five separate agencies are investigating the accident.

A crime reporter becomes a victim

A veteran crime reporter with *Le Journal de Montréal* was shot five times in the back just one day after the tabloid published his latest exposé. Michel Auger, 56, who has written extensively about Quebec's biker wars, survived the attack, which took place in his employer's parking lot. At week's end, the journalist remained in hospital in stable condition. Police seized a tape from a surveillance camera which showed a man getting out of a white car, shooting Auger and fleeing. They found the car abandoned nearby, someone had attempted to set it on fire, a trademark of biker-gang shootings. Police declined to comment on a motive, but Auger's co-workers claimed the attack was likely the work of organized crime. "This is disgusting because it's an attack on democracy," said Paule Beaugrand-Champagne, editor-in-chief of *Le Journal*.

The shooting prompted renewed calls for special anti-gang legislation to help deal with the turf wars in Quebec that have killed more than 150 people, mainly bikers, since 1994. Premier Lucien Bouchard said he would press Prime Minister Jean Chrétien to toughen the laws. "The safety of our citizens is at stake."

The harrowing survival of a little girl

A 10-year-old girl narrowly escaped a murder-suicide attempt. She was found wandering on a highway near Sudbury, Ont., suffering from exposure and the effects of carbon monoxide poisoning after her father had hooked their car's exhaust to its interior. Police say rain shorted out and opened one of the vehicle's electric windows, the girl got away while her 34-year-old father, disoriented from the fumes, stumbled into a swamp and drowned. The girl is back home with her mother in Mississauga, Ont., where she is expected to recover fully.



❶ An ambulance. ❷ The Army. ❸ Head office, to suggest bumping up the relocation schedule.

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Canada Notes

Counting on facts

One major issue in the dispute over native fishing rights centred on Burnt Church, N B , is just how many traps are pulling lobster from Miramichi Bay Mi'kmaq spokesmen say they have set fewer than 600; federal fisheries officers say there are as many as 2,000 native traps in the bay So Bob Rae, the former NDP premier of Ontario who is mediating the conflict, suggested the two sides count the number of traps together That way, they could at least begin to agree on the facts Earlier, Rae had said the two sides did not yet appear ready to mediate the dispute, which at times has turned violent

More garbage north

Councillors from York Region voted to begin shipping their garbage to an abandoned mine in Northern Ontario in two years York joins nearby Toronto and Durham Region in a controversial proposal to ship nearly 1 3 million tonnes of refuse annually 580 km north by train to the Adams Mine open-air pit near Kirkland Lake. The plan by a private consortium, Rail Cycle North, has sparked protests by local residents and environmentalists concerned about the effects of groundwater contamination

Sights set high

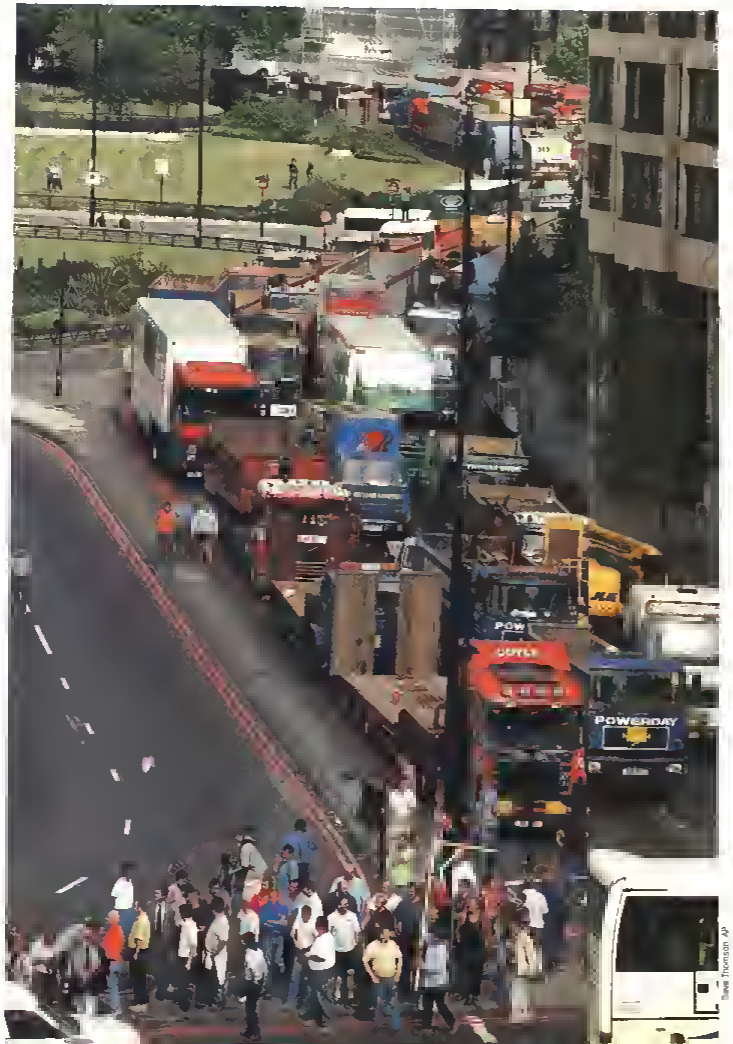
In a bid to compete with neighbouring Alberta, Saskatchewan said it plans to cut an average family's provincial personal income tax by 25 per cent by 2005 That was one of 19 targets for growth the province set for itself last week in areas such as job creation, investment and research development and high-speed Internet access Still, Saskatchewan may be hard-pressed to keep pace On the strength of booming energy prices, Alberta recently forecast record revenue of $8 5 billion this year. In contrast, Saskatchewan's total revenue from all sources is estimated to be $6 4 billion for 2000-2001



Pumped on Anger

The public cheers as truckers across Europe snarl traffic to protest the rising cost of fuel

By Barry Came in London



Steve Thomson/AP

A convoy of trucks blocks a street near London's Hyde Park; Blair (right) under siege



Pic no: Jonathan Penn/AP

Trafalgar Square is the kind of place where tempers fray easily, especially during rush hour. Traffic chaos is endemic in the broad plaza in the bustling heart of London, presided over by Lord Nelson atop his towering column. But when a band of British truckers brought a wildcat protest over fuel prices to the busy square last week, the resulting gridlock provoked few angry outbursts. Office workers leaned from windows, saluting the truck drivers with thumbs-up signals of support. Motorists hopelessly trapped among the huge trucks beeped their horns in smiling sympathy. Even the harried police seemed tolerant. "We know we're treading a fine line of public support here," said Steve Kelly, spokesman for the truckers, as he surveyed the scene. "It's not a good thing we're doing today and we're not proud of it. But it's an act of desperation. Something has to be done."

What Kelly and his fellow truckers wanted was government action to reduce the cost of fuel in Britain, where skyrocketing global oil prices and a local 76-per-cent tax rate mean that filling the tank of one of the wheeled behemoths parked under Nelson's steely gaze can run to 200 pounds sterling—roughly $400. In pursuit of their goal, British truckers, supported by an ad hoc coalition of farmers, fishermen and taxi drivers, came close to paralyzing Britain's transportation system last week. For seven days they blockaded roads, refineries, seaports and fuel depots, provoking a national crisis that saw the pumps at nearly all of the country's 12,500 gas stations run dry. The protests caused widespread inconvenience and inflicted staggering losses on the British economy, estimated by the London Chamber of Commerce at $500 million a day. But far from outraging public opinion, the protesters won popular applause. And that clearly rattled Prime Minister Tony Blair and the senior ministers in his 3½-year-old government. "Lives are at risk," a fatigued Blair declared, pleading on nationwide television for an end to the blockades. "Real damage is now being done to real people."

The British prime minister was not the only European politician under attack last week. Government leaders across the continent found themselves confronted by the same dilemma Blair faced: a spreading popular revolt against uniformly high fuel taxes. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder arrived for a meeting with local businessmen in Schwerin in northeastern Germany to find himself confronted by a booing, whistling crowd of 500 truckers and tractor-borne farmers, who taunted him with cries of "capitalist pig!" and "Schröder must go!" Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt spent the entire week negotiating an end to a trucker blockade that brought traffic in the centre of Brussels to a standstill, restricted access to the port cities of Antwerp and Zeebrugge and sealed the country's main border crossings with France, Germany and Holland. Irish motorists rushed to the pumps last Thursday after trucking associations in that country announced plans for a 24-hour road blockage. Protests also flared in Spain, Poland, Hungary, Norway and the Netherlands.

The huge scale and rapid sweep of the European fuel-tax revolt caught much of the continent's political leadership off-guard. Like Blair, most tended to dismiss the early signs of a gathering storm as yet another symptom of something widely derided in Europe as the "French disease." It was in France that the protests began, innocuously enough, in the small Atlantic fishing port of Concarneau late in August. Irked by the high cost of fuel, fishermen used their boats to blockade the port. Within a week, the movement spread to harbours all around the country, prompting the government of Prime Minister Lionel Jospin to agree to cut social security taxes for the fishing industry. That step, in time-honoured French fashion, encouraged the country's largely self-employed truckers, farmers, taxi drivers and others to launch their own industrial action. France's roads were soon clogged by rotating series of "escargot" protests, snail-paced convoys of trucks, tractors, taxis, buses, even ambulances. After a week of unrest that crippled the French economy, Jospin once again caved in, offering to slash diesel-fuel taxes by $580 million over two years.

France's partners in the 15-member European Union did not endorse Jospin's move. "It was not helpful," noted Spain's Loyola de Palacio, the EU's transport and energy commissioner. But few expected that the French disease would, on this occasion at least, prove to be contagious. First to be hit was Britain, where the price of fuel at the pump is the highest in the EU, even though the country is the only major oil producer in the union. Brynle Williams, a Welsh farmer, started it all early in September by organizing a vigil at the Shell refinery in Stanlow in northwestern England. By last week, a minority of the EU's 15 nations had evaded protests, while countries beyond the EU's boundaries—Poland, Hungary and Norway in particular—were also threatened by the truckers. "We'll Frenchify this conflict if the government does not take steps," vowed Fernando Moraleda, general secretary of Spain's Small Farmers Union.

Initially, most European political leaders attempted to shift the blame for the high price of fuel onto the shoulders of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, whose members agreed last week to increase production by 800,000 barrels a day in an effort to bring down oil prices that reached a recent 10-year high of $36 a barrel. "But the tactic did not work," said Anis Tawil, a London-based Mideast oil analyst. "The revolt we are witnessing is about taxes, not oil prices." Tawil has a point. A recent study by Goldman Sachs & Co. found that domestic fuel prices among the 11 nations in the single currency euro market had risen by 70

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GROWING OUTRAGE AT THE PUMPS

Average premium gasoline price per litre as of Sept. 11 in selected countries and the percentage that is tax

United States	$0.68	22.4%
Canada	$0.86	37%
Germany	$1.34	67%
Belgium	$1.40	63.4%
Italy	$1.42	63.2%
France	$1.43	68.6%
Netherlands	$1.55	63.6%
Britain	$1.68	75.8%

Sources: U.S. Energy Information Administration and M.J. Eckert & Associates

The rapid sweep of the revolt caught much of Europe's political leadership off-guard

per cent on average over the past year. Much of that rise is a result of taxes, accounting for roughly 60 per cent of the price at the pump.

In Britain, which is not part of the single currency, there is a 75.8-per-cent levy. (Government levies in Canada amount to 37 per cent of the price of premium gasoline, which last week stood at an average 86 cents per litre.) And perhaps in response to the conflict in Europe, Finance Minister Paul Martin said the Canadian government might consider cutting fuel taxes. "The low-income people are the people for whom certainly there is the greatest concern," said Martin following a speech in Toronto. "This is because of home-heating fuel and gasoline prices, and the question is, what is the best way to do it?"

European governments have justified the high taxes on ecological grounds, arguing that fuel taxes are necessary to both conserve diminishing fossil-fuel reserves and curb the use of motor vehicles whose emissions damage the environment.

Whatever the merits of that argument, last week's revolt demonstrated that Europe's public is not yet ready to buy the logic. The action severely inconvenienced just about everybody, not only running the pumps dry but prompting panic buying that emptied supermarket shelves. It came perilously close to damaging emergency services in hospitals, medical clinics, police stations and fire halls. Yet a poll taken by the British Broadcasting Corp. at the height of the disturbances found that 80 per cent of the British public supported the blockades. A German poll by the Emnid Institute turned up 80-per-cent public opposition to that country's ecology tax on fuels.

Fear of losing that public support eventually prompted many of the protesters to call off their blockades late last week. "We're lifting the siege while we still occupy the high moral ground," said Welsh farmer Williams, the man who started it all in Britain. A relieved Blair welcomed the move, vowing at the same time that his government would not bow to the protesters' demands. "However much people may dislike paying the petrol duty," said Blair, "there's no way that any government could or should yield to this form of protest."

That may be true. But the authorities in Belgium and Norway, emulating the French government, granted financial concessions to the protesters. And in Britain, the truckers and the farmers and the fishermen have threatened to return to the barricades in 60 days if no measures are adopted. The disease may be French in origin, but clearly it is catching. m



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Healing wounds

The White House announced that President Bill Clinton will visit Vietnam after the November presidential election. He will be the first U.S. president to travel to the Southeast Asian country since the end of the war in April, 1975, that claimed 57,000 American lives. Washington and Hanoi have been engaged in a process of reconciliation for the past five years.

Violence in Indonesia

For the second time, former Indonesian dictator Suharto failed to appear in court on charges of corruption. An independent medical team will now try to determine if Suharto is too ill to stand trial, as his family claims. The day before the hearing convened, a bomb at the Jakarta Stock Exchange killed 15 people—the latest in a string of bombings. At week's end President Abdurrahman Wahid ordered the arrest of Suharto's son Tommy in connection with the latest incident.

Limited freedom

Myanmar's military government released Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the country's pro-democracy movement, and eight of her colleagues from two weeks of house arrest. The democracy activists quickly vowed to test the government's limits on freedom with new political organizing. Aung San Suu Kyi, 55, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991—a year after she had led her National League for Democracy Party to a sweeping electoral victory that was not honoured by the military.

A plea for children

Retired Canadian Lt.-Gen. Roméo Dallaire appeared before the International Conference on War-Affected Children in Winnipeg to plead for the rights of children in war-torn countries. "Why can't we create an abhorrence to destroying children?" he asked. "Why can't we make that as abhorrent as the use of nuclear weapons?" Later, Ottawa appointed Dallaire, who witnessed the horrors of genocide while heading the United Nations' peacekeeping mission in Rwanda in 1994, as special adviser on war-affected children.



Drawn by U of Calgary

Discovery of a temple fit for a queen

An international team of scientists, including archeologists from the University of Calgary, unearthed the Temple of the Moon God, a 3,000-year-old sanctuary the legendary Queen of Sheba may have inhabited, in northern Yemen. According to the Bible, the fabled queen visited King Solomon. She later bore his son, but there has been no physical evidence she ever existed. It would be of immense historical significance if scientists can link her to the temple.

Alleged nuclear weapons spy freed

U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno steadfastly refused to apologize to former Los Alamos nuclear scientist Wen Ho Lee—even after a New Mexico federal judge released him from prison and President Bill Clinton rebuked Reno's department for its conduct in the case. Lee, who was held in solitary confinement for nine months before being released on Sept. 13, had been investigated for at least five years on the suspicion that he leaked secrets about a sophisticated nuclear warhead, the W-88, to China. He was fired from his job in the Los Alamos National Laboratory in March, 1999. But he was not arrested until December, after government agents had searched his home and found evidence that he downloaded nuclear weapons secrets to an unsecured computer and then to 10 computer tapes—seven of which are still missing.

Under a plea agreement, which requires Lee to undergo three weeks of FBI debriefings about the tapes, Lee pleaded guilty to a single count of mishandling nuclear secrets. Immediately after his release, he filed a lawsuit against the FBI and the Justice Department for leaking confidential information about him to the media.

The U.S. election season heats up

New York Senate rivals Hillary Rodham Clinton and Representative Rick Lazio attacked each other during a 60-minute televised debate in Buffalo. Lazio prodded Clinton to renounce the use of so-called soft campaign contributions that have proven to be a major benefit for the First Lady. Clinton refused, until Lazio orders a halt to independent advertising campaigns being waged on his behalf. Meanwhile, in the U.S. presidential campaign, Gov. George W. Bush finally agreed to three 90-minute debates with Democrat Al Gore.



Monty (left), Thomson and Thomson Corp CEO Richard Harrington: a sum greater than the parts

Kevin Frayer, CP

A Media Colossus

By Katherine Macklem

Over the past year, Jean Monty has been buying up properties and piling them on top of one another much like a winner at a blackjack table stacks his chips in multi-coloured towers. In February, the chairman and chief executive of BCE Inc. dished out $6.8 billion for control of Teleglobe Inc. Then, later that month, came his surprising cash offer of $2.3 billion for CTV Inc. His latest deal, announced last Friday alongside Canada's richest man, Ken Thomson, will create a new media company that gives BCE, at one time just a phone company, control of Thomson Corp.'s *The Globe and Mail*.

Monty isn't the only one stacking his chips. Last week, Pierre-Karl Péladeau's Quebecor Inc. emerged the winner of a long, drawn-out battle over Groupe Vidéotron Ltée, the Montreal-based cable company. Péladeau, a newspaper owner whose company is the world's biggest printer, is paying $5.4 billion for Vidéotron, a serious chip he'll stack on top of tabloid chain Sun Media Corp., which was snagged by Quebecor last year.

Also solidly in the game is Ted Rogers, the cable magnate who was on the losing end of the Vidéotron battle. Rogers, president and CEO of Rogers Communications Inc., earlier this month bought the Toronto Blue Jays, and promises he will have more purchases to come. There's another important player: Izzy Asper, who with his son Leonard runs broadcaster CanWest Global Communications Corp. They picked up a string of major Canadian newspapers plus a half-interest in the *Globe*'s archrival, the *National Post*, from Hollinger International Inc. in July.

Eyeing the Internet, BCE and Thomson marry *The Globe and Mail* and the CTV empire

What's going on? Why is a phone company buying TV stations and a newspaper? Why is Quebecor, a newspaper company, buying a cable company? Why is Rogers, the cable guy, buying a baseball team? And why is a television broadcaster buying newspapers? In a buzzword, it's all about convergence. The idea is that as all forms of media converge into one system, based on the Internet, the various pieces of these increasingly massive conglomerates will, like an army of ants, fare much better together than if each were on its own. The result? A rapid-fire series of big-dollar deals that draw together previously disparate companies—and completely remap the communications landscape. "There's almost a new secular religion that's emerging around the question of convergence," says David Spencer, a media professor at the University of Western Ontario in London. "It's going to be the technological equivalent of a jihad, a holy war out there."

With last week's deal, Monty is creating a new, yet-to-be-named media colossus worth, he said, about $4 billion. It will hold CTV, the *Globe*, a series of specialty TV channels (such as The Sports Network and Discovery Channel Canada), BCE's Sympatico-Lycos Web portal and the *Globe*'s Internet properties. Monty's BCE will own 70.1 per cent of the new company. Thomson Corp., controlled by Thomson, will contribute its ownership of the *Globe* and hold 20 per cent, while Woodbridge Co. Ltd., the Thomson family's holding company, will ante up $385 million for a 9.9-per-cent ownership position.

The new entity will be the country's "première media company," Monty told reporters. "While others may be larger, at the moment," he said jauntily, "none can boast the suite of No. 1 brands." Monty stressed that cross-pollination will take place between the new enterprise's different parts and that content created on one platform will be refitted and used again on another. "Information and resources can ultimately be shared throughout," he said.

Monty knows the Internet is about to cause a shift in economic power—moving it further away from what used to be his company's exclusive territory. Deregulation of the telephone business had already cut into the affairs of what used to be called Bell Canada Enterprises Inc. Then, as the central Canadian telephone company expanded into other fields as a way of protecting its turf, the Net arrived. Monty's response has been to jump right into the online game. But as technology changes, so do the rules of play. That makes it increasingly difficult to predict what the contest will look like and what sort of player will have the best edge.

Monty envisions what he calls "a shift in the balance of value." He talks of three Cs: connectivity companies, which provide the pipelines, such as cable or phone links; commerce, which acts as the middleman selling the product to the consumer; and content, which is the stuff the consumer wants to receive, be it a piece of music or a train schedule.

Twenty years ago, the pipeline companies provided a much more highly valued service, Monty told *Maclean's*, holding his right hand high in the air—"much higher than the sum of the other two." Now, the value has shifted, he said, raising his left hand while dropping the right one. "Do we participate in that shift, from a strategic point of view? My answer, our answer is, yes, and that's why you're seeing us put together this media company."

Monty and the Thomson group first began talking about last week's deal in December, 1999. Early on, discussions touched on BCE and Thomson going after CTV together. "They were really thinking our their strategy," Monty said. "They had the newspaper business and so on. They were convinced there was something there, but they just weren't sure of the formula yet, so I said, 'Let's do it ourselves and we'll continue our dialogue.' And that's what we did." Why did it take another seven months? "These are big organizations." Finally, last Friday at 8 a.m., a scant three hours before the deal was officially announced, the papers were signed. One looming deadline was this week, when BCE will be in Ottawa defending its acquisition of CTV to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. Monty didn't want to have to hide the pending Thomson deal from the CRTC, he said.

Ken Thomson also got busy. In February, the chairman of Thomson Corp. put all his remaining newspapers except the *Globe* up for sale. The plan followed a continuing strategy to focus on the firm's burgeoning electronic data and information businesses. Most of the papers found buyers, leaving the *Globe* and the *Winnipeg Free Press* as the only major Canadian dailies in the Thomson fold. The firm now is looking for a "good home" for the *Free Press*, Thomson said. The 77-year-old tycoon, who at each round of newspaper sell-offs had maintained he would hold on tight to the *Globe*, said there will continue to be a connection between Thomson Corp. and the national newspaper. "This is not a sale of *The Globe and Mail*," Thomson insisted. "This is a merger."

Thomson, who stays on as the *Globe*'s chairman, may end up busier than ever at the newspaper. Monty, who joked with

The Titans of Convergence

The BCE-Thomson deal has created a giant, with three major challengers. Key enterprises owned or controlled by Canada's four major media companies (with non-majority holdings and deals not completed in brackets)



Chairman **Jean Monty**

BCE Inc.
Market value $23 6 billion

Bell Canada
Telephone and Internet services

Bell Mobility
Mobile phones

Bell ExpressVu
Satellite TV

BCE Emergis
E-commerce software and services

Teleglobe (23%, 100% pending)
Long-distance carrier

BCE-Thomson
New company to contain

CTV Inc. (pending)
18 CTV stations seven others, plus
- CTV Newsnet
- The Sports Network



The Sopranos airs on CTV

- Comedy Network
- Sportsnet (40%)
- Outdoor Life Network
- Discovery Channel Canada
- Talk TV

Sympatico-Lycos
Web portal

The Globe and Mail
National newspaper

ROBTv
Business TV channel (50%)

Globa Interactive
Nine Web sites, including *Globeandmail com*, *Globeinvestor com*, *Workopolis com* (jobs)



President and CEO
Ted Rogers

ROGERS

Rogers Communications Inc.
Market value $7 4 billion

Rogers Cable Inc.
Cable TV and video rentals

Rogers AT&T Wireless
Mobile phones

Toronto Blue Jays (pending)
Baseball team

Rogers Media Inc.
Properties including:
- 28 radio stations
- The Shopping Channel
- CFMT TV, Toronto
- 55 publications, including *Maclean's*, *Chatelaine*, *Flare*, *Canadian Business*, *MoneySense*, *The Medical Post*
- Web sites including Excite Canada, Quicken Financial Network and Electric Library Canada

Alliances

At Home Corp
High speed Internet service

AT&T Canada Corp
Telecommunications



Blue Jays pitcher David Wells



CanWest Global Communications Corp.

Executive chairman **Izzy Asper** (left)
President and CEO **Leonard Asper**

CanWest Global Communications
Market value $1 5 billion

Global Televisiaa Network
10 TV stations across Canada

Fiva ather Caaadiaa TV stations



Scene from Global TV show *Friends*

Prime
Entertainment TV channel

ROBTv
Business TV channel (50%)

Southam Newspapar Group (pending)
13 major dailies and 136 smaller papers

Natiaaal Post (50%, pending)
National newspaper

Network TEN
Australian TV

TV3 & TV4
New Zealand

CaaWest New Zealand Radia
More than 30 radio stations

TV3 (45%)
Insh Republic

UTV (30%)
Northern Ireland

Caaada.com
Web portal



President and CEO
Pierre-Karl Péladaaa

QUEBECOR INC.

Quebecor Inc.
Market value $2 5 billion

Quebecor World Inc
Printing plants in North America, South America and Europe

Oraape Vidéotraa Ltéa (pending)
Cable TV

TVA (pending)
French-language TV network

Sua Media Corp.
Newspapers including the *Sun* tabloids, *The London Free Press* and *Le Journal de Montreal*

Canoe.ca
Web portal



reporters that a front-page *Globe* scoop on the merger details set off "cardiac arrests" in BCE's legal department, said his company wants to learn from Thomson how to protect the independence of the newsroom. Overseeing the new venture as CEO, under Monty as chairman, will be CTV's current president, Ivan Fecan.

Rumours—published most notably in the *Globe* itself—had it that BCE and Thomson also tried to take a run at the holding company of the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team. The only thing Monty would say was the team wasn't involved in the current deal with Thomson. "It could be looked at later," he said.

If BCE does go for a sports team, it will not surprise Charles Sirois. As the entrepreneur who built up and then sold long-distance carrier Teleglobe to BCE and who now heads privately held Telesystem Ltd., he is both a keen observer of the convergence mania, and a sometime player. Through Microcell Telecommunications Inc., a Telesystem holding that operates the Fido cellphone network, he is a competitor to BCE's Bell Mobility and Rogers AT&T Wireless on the mobile side of the business.

Traditionally, Sirois notes, the players that control the physical bottleneck on information—television networks, cable companies, newspaper publishers—are the ones who get rich. But he predicts that in 10 years, 70 per cent of Canadian homes will have high-speed Internet access via several competing systems, be it wireless or high-speed phone lines or cable. That means the method of delivery will become much less important and far less lucrative than the product. And that's why the telecommunications companies are buying the so-called content providers—and sure-fire draws such as sports franchises. Content is becoming king. The plan to control such sources, though, is not necessarily going to work, Sirois adds. "If I am a content producer, why should I limit myself to one pipe?" he says. "If I'm a pipe producer, do you really believe society will allow you to block content?"

Monty admits his plan is not foolproof, but he says intuitively he believes convergence is the way to go. "There's been much debate about what the ideal media company of the Internet economy should look like," he says. "I believe we have the right recipe. What is not known is whether with these pieces together, will the sum be greater than the parts? At the end of the day, we'll prove it by doing it."

Still, even though all the major telecom companies are bulking up, the convergence strategy is unproven. Monty remembers the mid-1980s, when BCE Comncor, a subsidiary he headed at the time, was involved in a U.S.-based service called iNet. It was a rudimentary precursor to the Web, providing access to almost 3,000 databases. But the project was a bust and cost BCE $30 million. Monty now says it was ahead of its time. This time around, as BCE again steps into unknown territory, the company is hedging its bets, he says. "We'll put properties that are well-known brands—No. 1 brands—together and see whether we can manage a convergence environment, but not blow our brains out while we're doing it."

Still, Monty balks at the comparison to a blackjack player. "I wouldn't say a gambler, but a business trying to build," he says. "Calculated bets," he adds. Yet even Monty knows he's playing in a high-stakes game where the outcome is unpredictable. Had he been told, even just a decade ago, that BCE would end up owning a newspaper and a television network, he says, "I would have said, 'No way.' So we'll see what 10 years from now brings." And who is left at the table. m



Deirdre McMurdy

Flying around Air Canada

It is said about academic politics that the fighting is so intense because the stakes are so small. But that adage could be applied just as easily to Canada's airline sector, where a flock of increasingly aggressive small carriers are scrapping over the fragments of the domestic market not entirely dominated by Air Canada.

In recent weeks, some of the start-up mini-airlines, which hope to profit from travellers' demands for lower prices or an alternative to the troubled monopoly, have had a turbulent flight. Last week, the president and chief executive of Calgary-based WestJet Airlines Ltd., Stephen Smith, was unceremoniously dumped by company founder and executive chairman Clive Beddoe. The previous week, CanJet Airlines inaugurated a new air service in Eastern Canada. Within days, it had filed a formal complaint against Air Canada's "predatory pricing" with the federal Competition Bureau. Air Canada had slashed ticket costs on several competitive routes just one day after CanJet's launch. Meanwhile, the much-heralded start-up of RootsAir has now been delayed from November until early 2001.

Watching the turmoil among his potential rivals is Michel Leblanc, founder, chairman, president and chief executive of Montreal's Royal Airlines. On Aug. 24, after two years of quiet planning, Royal announced that it was doubling its low-cost, scheduled flights on key routes in Eastern Canada.

Its new service is especially noteworthy because it offers Aeroplan points to its customers, redeemable on Air Canada, Royal or other participating carriers. Royal was able to make that offer because when Air Canada acquired Canadian Airlines International Ltd., one of the conditions imposed by the federal Competition Bureau was that the Aeroplan program be opened to other carriers who wanted to purchase and distribute points in the popular incentive plan.

A veteran of the airline business, Leblanc says he's confident that the relatively small domestic market can comfortably sustain all of the fiercely competitive entrants. "The market is actually getting bigger because of the economy, and lower fares directly stimulate demand," he insists. "We know the niches we want to dominate, and that's where we're focused." After years of building a charter airline service, Leblanc is intent on securing a chunk of the business travel market. That's where Aeroplan points and the increased frequency of daily flights between Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto enter his strategy.

Leblanc has literally spent a lifetime to reach this point in his career. His father, Roger, was general manager of a small airplane charter business and flight school in Quebec. As a teenager, Michel refuelled and washed planes every summer. "You have quite a realistic sense of the business when you've spent hours scrubbing the bugs off aircraft windshields," he notes. And he still recalls with delight his first flight, at age 5, with his father in a two-seater Piper J3.

After graduating from the University of Montreal and completing an MBA at the University of Buffalo, Leblanc spent most of the 1970s in the sales end of the aviation industry. By the end of the decade, he and a partner had formed their own venture, winning lucrative government contracts to spray forests in northern Quebec from old transport planes. In 1986, the government of Quebec privatized Quebecair, and Leblanc, backed by investors, bought the cash-strapped regional carrier. "Quebecair was a complete basket case," he says of the firm he turned around and made profitable in 18 months.

Eventually, Quebecair became the regional affiliate for Canadian Airlines. But that relationship fell apart when Canadian hit financial turbulence in 1990. By 1991, Leblanc had decided to sell out and take a break. But his vacation didn't last long: in April, 1992, his new charter airline service, Royal, took off.

Leblanc admits that operating a low-cost holiday charter service to the Caribbean and Mexico is quite different from being a scheduled carrier. As a charter service, Royal only had to sell itself to a small, familiar circle of tour operators. Now, it has had to develop a marketing program for the general consumer, deploy a computer reservation system, lease more jets, and hire and train new staff in a tight labour market—all at a time when fuel costs are soaring.

Still, Leblanc is convinced the time is right for Royal's push away from its dependence on the charter market. He says the advent of the Internet makes it much cheaper to organize and distribute tickets to a wide range of consumers. And over the past two years, the company has been working to develop a reliable in-house reservation system. "Our objective is to have you wait one minute, not 15 minutes, like some," he says, referring to one of the major complaints about the post-merger Air Canada.

Instead of confronting the high cost of new planes, Royal will initially lease some secondhand aircraft this fall, bringing its total fleet to 16. And despite sniping from competing start-ups, Leblanc is optimistic. "We've always gone where opportunity takes us," he says. "What matters is just being in the airline business." No matter how high his airline may fly, Leblanc himself is determined to keep his attitude pragmatic—and grounded.

ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT

Automotive Marketplace ONTARIO

Dealers Aim to Please





Dennis DesRosiers

Back in the early 1960s, a young market researcher by the name of J. David Power started to mail out surveys to new car buyers asking them how satisfied they were with their vehicle and their dealer. He compiled and analyzed the results at his kitchen table and then ran around Detroit telling executives that consumers were not very happy with their product. He was largely ignored.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, his research started to tell a different story. Consumers buying and driving Japanese vehicles were rating their vehicles as having much higher quality than vehicles produced by the Big Three. Consumers were very satisfied with their Japanese vehicles and their dealers, and consumers were becoming loyal to those new brands. There was trouble brewing in Motor City. Power's message was still largely ignored by Detroit, but when the Japanese started to take large chunks of the market from the Big Three, his research began to be taken very seriously. Indeed, it has become one of the most important areas of research in the automotive sector.

J. David Power literally invented the concept of the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) and today CSI is the mantra of the auto sector. Each year, millions of surveys are mailed by a variety of market research firms asking consumers for their opinions about their vehicles and/or the treatment these consumers

receive at their car dealers The results are considered of key importance by all levels in the automotive industry Every month, each dealership in Canada receives a CSI score that rates it on a wide variety of factors important to consumers Dealers who consistently achieve low scores can lose their franchises

Through the concept of CSI, consumers have become very powerful. Indeed, consumers have never been in a better position during the entire history of the auto industry Dealers have no choice but to respond to them and most have gone into super-coddle mode and will jump through hoops to please their customers.

There are other factors in the industry that have also put power into the hands of the consumer Vehicles are now so well built that consumers do not need to purchase as often In Canada, the average new car buyer now purchases a new vehicle every 8 2 years, up substantially from a decade ago. Dealers can't count on the consumer returning every two or three years as they did in the past, so dealers have to make sure they take care of the customer and don't lose the sale

The longer life of vehicles also means that vehicles will undergo more repairs and maintenance over their lifespan The consumer will choose where those repairs will be performed and high customer satisfaction is critical in determining who gets the service dollars Dealer gross profit in a new vehicle is only about $1,500 per unit, but profit from service over the life of a vehicle can be more than $5,000 Dealers who do not satisfy the consumer at time of sale may lose much of this repair profit

Qualitatively, the choices in the marketplace are getting better and better and there is significantly more consumer choice for all aspects of vehicle ownership There are 3,500 car dealers in Canada, but more than 20,000 other outlets for repairs and service In addition, the Internet is slowly emerging as a viable medium for pur-

Volkswagen Passat 4MOTION™

4MOTION™ will continue to enhance Volkswagen's position in the market by offering an intelligent form of all-wheel drive technology now available on the Passat. With its all-surface performance and stability, road hugging characteristics and continuous all-wheel power, 4MOTION™ magnifies the driving attributes inherent in all Volkswagens. Added security for Ontario's unpredictable weather. Test drive a Passat 4MOTION™ at your local Volkswagen Dealer today!

Drivers wanted.



With everybody going off road, how about a car that keeps you on it?

The Passat now has 4MOTION,™ the new all-wheel drive system that sticks car to road like old chewing gum to school desk Using an active safety system, it shifts power to the wheels that need it most Ergo, you stay between the lines, which, in this case, is a good thing

Drivers wanted.

Volkswagen 1 800 DRIVE VW or VW.COM

chasing a vehicle. The Internet has already put consumers in the driver's seat on price negotiation as well as giving consumers access to better information about vehicles. Also, independent used-car dealers are slowly cleaning up their act and are becoming much more professional. In the financial sector, fierce competition among financial institutions has yielded dozens of ways for consumers to finance their purchases.

This explosion of choice provides consumer leverage. Consumers can flex their muscles and use their power. By returning their survey forms, consumers are rating their dealer's performance and, in effect, forcing dealers to please their customers.

The rewards for those in the industry that provide "Top Box" Satisfaction can be significant. The average transaction price of a new vehicle is close to $30,000. For a used vehicle it is about $15,000. Consumers who experience "Top Box" Satisfaction are very loyal to their dealers with both their new vehicle purchases and used vehicle purchases.

Close to 70 per cent of consumers repurchase the same make of vehicle if they experience "Top Box" Satisfaction with their dealer. This drops to only about 30 per cent if the consumer was only generally satisfied and it falls again to only about 15 per cent for those consumers who were dissatisfied.

It is interesting to see that dealers are a more crucial factor in repurchase loyalty than the vehicle itself. Although satisfaction with the vehicle is also important, "Top Box" Satisfaction with it does not produce the same loyalty as "Top Box" Satisfaction with the dealer.

This tells me that a really good car dealer can do a lot to overcome a consumer's dissatisfaction with a problem vehicle. It also tells me that consumers are inherently loyal. It is the dealer who comes up short from a satisfaction perspective who forces consumers to be disloyal.

Volvo S40 and V40: personal transportation with personality

As an antidote to boring "point-A to point-B" driving, Volvo S40 sedan and V40 wagon introduce a whole new alphabet of motoring pleasure.

Sumptuous heated seats, electronic climate control, cup holders that actually work – all are integrated into interiors that reflect Volvo's Scandinavian design heritage. It's a harmonious blend of sculpted shapes, subtle tones and appealing surfaces that reward the senses.



Volvo S40 and V40

Famous Volvo safety-engineering is embodied in the S40 and V40 with a comprehensive array of occupant protection features including front- and side-air bags, side impact protection system, and the new inflatable curtain and whiplash protection system.

The new 2001 Volvo S40 and V40 also deliver exhilarating power and poise. Quick and agile, they effortlessly outwit downtown traffic yet their lean exterior dimensions allow them to slip into undersized parking spaces.

Once away from the crowds, crisp handling, eager acceleration and exceptional high-speed cruising stability deliver a level of driving pleasure absent in today's cookie-cutter transportation modules.

For people with diverse interests and active lifestyles, the Volvo V40 wagon expands the definition of personal transportation with its practical design. Mountain bikes? Skis? Dog? Load them in.

2001 Volvo S40 and V40... exciting alternatives for people with a passion for driving.

VOLVO
for life

OUR STANDARD LINE UP OF SAFETY FEATURES.

2001 Volvo S40

From $29,995

2001 Volvo V40

From $30,995

2000 Volvo S80 2.9

Lease for $599 a month for 36 months.

2001 Volvo V70 2.4T

Lease for $550 a month for 36 months.

2000 Volvo C70 Convertible

Lease for $699 a month for 36 months.

For the year 2000, Volvo presents you with some exciting new choices. From our wagons to convertibles, dynamic designs and sleek styling are now standard equipment.

Of course we realize that great looks will only get you so far, which is why our remarkable line up still comes with all of Volvo's legendary safety features. So you can go for hot looks and power and still play it safe.

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Thornhill
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McMillan & Saunders Volvo
3295 Derry Road East
Mississauga
(905) 677-4230

Lawrence Park Volvo
612 Mount Pleasant Road
Toronto
(416) 486-7601

Erin Mills Volvo
2466 Matheway Blvd.
Mississauga
(905) 607 4239

Volvo of Oakville
770 Pacific Road
Oakville
(905) 825 6088

Robert Motors
5450 Dundas St. W
Toronto
(416) 231 1584

Chevalier Volvo
14563 Yonge Street
Aurora
(416) 213 7104

Manufacturer's Suggested Retail price for a 2001 Volvo S40 and V40 are $26 695 and $30 995 respectively. Taxes, licence, insurance, freight and delivery extra. Retailer may sell for less. 3.9%, 7.5% and 5.2% lease or finance available on 2000 Volvo S80 2.9 and T6, 2001 Volvo V70 and 2000 C70 coupe or convertible respectively. Limited time offer available until September 30, 2000 through participating Volvo retailers and Volvo Car Financial Services Canada on approved credit to qualified retail customers only. Delivery required by September 30, 2000. Example lease on a 2000 Volvo S80 2.9/2001 V70 2.4 T/2000 C70 Convertible LT: $599.13/$549.47/$699.13 per month, 36 month term, $8745/$9720/$8245 down payment or equivalent trade. Monthly payments total $$$ 65/$18 785.32/$25 186.65. Purchase at end of lease for $27 718.65/$25 745.10/$32,476.30. Payment may vary by choice of extra equipment. Freight and delivery of $950, taxes, licence and insurance extra. First month's lease payment and security deposit required. Lease has a 20 000 km per year allowance ($0.16 per km on excess). Retailer may lease for less. See your Volvo retailer for details and other lease options. Finance example: $25 000 financed at 3.9% over 36 months, monthly payment is $736.96. Total cost of borrowing is $1531.64. Freight and delivery of $950, taxes, licence and insurance extra. ©2000 Volvo Cars of Canada Ltd. "Volvo for life" is a trade-mark of Volvo Cars of Canada Ltd. Always remember to wear your seat belt. Visit www.volvocanada.com

Consumers Repurchasing Same Make of Vehicle

	If Vehicle Purchased New	If Vehicle Purchased Used
"Top Box" Satisfaction with Dealer	70%	68%
Generally Satisfied with Dealer	30%	28%
Dissatisfied with Dealer	18%	9%
"Top Box" Satisfaction with Vehicle	60%	33%
Generally Satisfied with Vehicle	28%	14%
Dissatisfied with Vehicle	12%	8%

"Top Box" Satisfaction also extends into the back of the dealership and is a large factor in determining who the customer will choose to do the maintenance and repairs on a vehicle. Close to 70 per cent of consumers have their maintenance performed at a dealer if they experience "Top Box" Satisfaction with the dealership. This drops to about 40 per cent for those consumers dissatisfied with their dealer. Similar to repurchase loyalty, satisfaction with the vehicle is less important than satisfaction with the dealer. However, consumers who are satisfied with their vehicle are still more loyal on maintenance work than those who are not satisfied.

What this information means is that only dealers who absolutely delight their customers from a satisfaction perspective can expect their customers to reward them with more business. It also tells us that because dealers are in the frontline they can make up far any shortcomings in the vehicle companies whose products they sell.

Most important, it tells us that consumers are truly in the power position in this industry and explains why dealers now do so much to please their customers.

Where Consumers Go For Service

	Dealer	Independent Garage	Specialty Shop	Do-It Yourself
"Top Box" Satisfaction with Dealer	68%	20%	2%	5%
Generally Satisfied with Dealer	48%	38%	4%	8%
Dissatisfied with Dealer	41%	40%	6%	8%
"Top Box" Satisfaction with Vehicle	45%	33%	4%	10%
Generally Satisfied with Vehicle	38%	43%	4%	12%
Dissatisfied with Vehicle	34%	46%	5%	10%

SUBARU LEGACY & FORESTER
Rated "Best Performers" in Crash Tests!

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has announced that both the 2000 Subaru Legacy and the 2000 Subaru Forester were the top performers in their respective classes during recent 40 mph (64.5 km/h) front offset crash tests. The Legacy was tested against six other mid-size four door cars and was the only vehicle to earn an overall "good" evaluation. Similarly, the Forester was compared to seven other popular SUV models and, once again, was the only product to receive an overall "good" rating.



The Institute's crash worthiness ratings – good, acceptable, marginal or poor - are based on a frontal offset crash into a deformable barrier. According to the IIHS, this impact is especially demanding on vehicle structure. The driver's side of the vehicle hits the barrier, so a relatively small area of the front end must manage crash energy. This means intrusion into the occupant compartment is more likely to occur than a full width test.

Three Key Variables Measured

The overall evaluation is based various aspects of performance, including three key variables. 1) Measurements of occupant compartment intrusion. 2) Injury data from a Hybrid III dummy positioned in the driver's seat. 3) Analysis of a slow motion film to access how well the restraint system controlled dummy movement during the impact.

Frontal Offset Crash Test Results

Overall	GOOD
Structure/safety cage	A
Injury measures.	
Head/neck	GOOD
Chest	GOOD
Leg/foot, left	A
Leg/foot, right	GOOD
Restraints/dummy kinematics	GOOD

IMPORTANT: Compared with other small utility vehicles – compare ratings only w th vehicles of similar weight.

Subaru Engineers Not Surprised

Officials at Subaru Canada, Inc released the following statement. Everyone at Subaru is gratified with these test evaluations. But the results themselves are not surprising as every Subaru is designed with a very high level of both active and passive safety. All of our vehicles are protected by a front and rear crumple zones, side impact door beams, a collapsible steering column and an uncompromising steel cage. In addition, our unique horizontal "boxer' engine is specifically positioned to move downward, under the cabin area, in a frontal impact.



More information on these tests is available at **www.subaru.ca & wwwhwysafety.org** as well as from your Subaru dealer who can be reached by calling **1-800 876-4AWD**

SUBARU

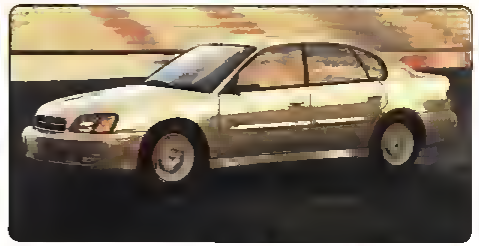
For Those Who Make Their Own Tracks!





2001 FORESTER-L LEASE $299* PER MONTH

FEATURES INCLUDE:
- Full Time All-Wheel Drive
- ABS, 4 Channel/4 Sensor
- 2.5 L SOHC, 165 hp Engine
- Dual Airbags
- Air Conditioning (CFC Free)
- Cruise Control
- Power Windows & Locks
- AM/FM Cassette Stereo
- And much, much more!



2000 LEGACY GT LEASE $329* PER MONTH

FEATURES INCLUDE:
- Full Time All-Wheel Drive
- ABS, 4 Channel/4 Sensor
- 2.5 L SOHC, 165 hp Engine
- Dual Airbags
- Air Conditioning (CFC Free)
- Heated Front Seats
- Cruise Control
- Power Windows
- And much, much more!

SUBARU
The Beauty of All-Wheel Drive.

Experience the superior control of Subaru full time All-Wheel drive!

NAUTICA

Wall Street's new giant

Chase Manhattan Corp said it would buy 139-year-old J P Morgan & Co for $48 billion. The merger of the two Wall Street houses to create the third-largest U S financial firm—to be called J P Morgan Chase & Co—set off speculation that other famous names could become takeover targets, including Merrill Lynch & Co Inc. Canadian bank stocks also rose amid rumours Citigroup Inc., the top U S. firm, was after a stake in the Royal Bank of Canada.

Chapters says it's OK

Chapters Inc. CEO Larry Stevenson told shareholders the bookselling chain is in a strong financial position and would have a profitable Christmas quarter. He said the firm, beset by summer reports of late payments to suppliers, had sufficient liquidity to get through the traditional loss-making months to the lucrative holiday season.

Siebel gets Janna

Toronto-based financial services software firm Janna Systems Inc., one of the year's top performers on the Toronto Stock Exchange, was sold to San Mateo, Calif.-based Siebel Systems Inc. for $1.4 billion. Both firms make software helping companies manage customer relations and e-commerce.

London jilts Frankfurt

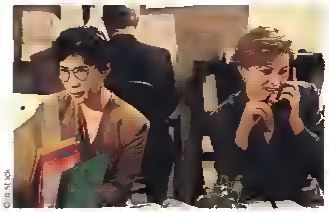
The London Stock Exchange called off plans to create a pan-European market by merging with Frankfurt's bourse, amid a hostile takeover bid by the firm controlling Stockholm's exchange. The LSE's pro-merger chief executive, Gavin Casey, later resigned. Analysts said other exchanges, including Frankfurt's, might also bid for the LSE.

Ad agency swallowed

Paris-based giant Havas Advertising bought Toronto's 76-year-old Vickers & Benson Advertising Ltd., one of the last major Canadian-owned agencies. Vickers, acquired for an undisclosed amount, was known for its Bank of Montreal and McDonald's ads. Chairman John Hayter said that to compete it was essential to join a global organization with broad resources.

Women make gains—slowly

It amounts to a six-cent raise in 10 years. At least, that is how it averages out for working women in Canada, judging from a major new report from Statistics Canada. According to "Women in Canada 2000," full-time working women earned only 72.5 cents for every $1 a man earned in 1997, the latest year studied. The 294-page report—which pulls together statistics on a broad range of issues, from women's health and housing to workforce participation and involvement in the criminal justice system—adds that in 1987, full-time working women earned 66.1 cents for every $1 a man earned. And much of the narrowing of the wage gap resulted from men's wages stagnating; their average incomes rose only six per cent from 1993 to 1997, while women's edged up 14 per cent.



In the workplace, stark numbers for managers

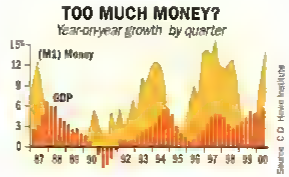
The report contains some particularly stark numbers for the women who now hold 35 per cent of managerial positions (up from 29 per cent in 1987). Women in management make only 65 cents for every $1 a man earns in the same job. "The pace of change," said Nancy Zukewich, the report's editor, "has been very slow."

A set time for interest-rate changes

Investors need no longer awake in the morning in a cold sweat, wondering, Did interest rates go up before I could sell? Bank of Canada governor Gordon Thiessen said Canada's basic rate will now be decided on a scheduled eight dates a year. By law, the bank can change the rate on any weekday, normally before markets open. But Thiessen said the new system, similar to that used in the United States, Britain and Europe's euro zone, will offer more transparency and predictability. Analysts said it could also lead to more volatility in the Canadian dollar.

Financial Outlook

William Robson looks into the future and worries. As director of research at the C. D. Howe Institute, he has been studying the "explosive" growth of M1 money supply, which measures the country's cash and chequing accounts and is thus closely associated with spending. It was up 24 per cent annually in July. Changes in M1 have been a reliable predictor of how the economy and inflation will move in the near future. In August, the inflation rate actually fell to 2.5 per cent from three per cent in July. But the booming economy has led consumers and business to borrow and spend a lot, pushing up M1. Robson believes this will spark higher inflation, and in turn, sharp interest rate hikes. His solution: a small rate hike now to rein in M1 and avoid inflation shock.





Tech Explorer

Will there be a Me generation?

Microsoft's launch of Windows Millennium Edition, its latest operating system for the home PC market, raises an obvious question: Should consumers bother replacing Windows 98 or 95 software with an upgrade that has a very similar look, with only a few added features? A number of industry observers think it may not be worth the $85 for the Windows 98 upgrade, or $169 for the Windows 95 retooling.

The Millennium Edition—known, inevitably, as Windows Me—has definite advantages, notably the "system restore" option, which saves the contents of a hard drive at regular intervals. Should the computer crash, Windows Me allows users to revert back to a setting prior to the disaster. As well, files required to run the computer cannot be erased. There is also improved software to handle digital photographs, edit videos, and receive audio and video from the Internet. And it comes with Internet Explorer 5.5 and Windows Media Player 7, though these are already available free on the Web.

But a problem with Windows Me is it's a storage and processing hog, which can take up as much as a hefty 635 megabytes of disk space, and needs, at a minimum, a 150-megahertz Pentium chip to run. Some computer experts are telling consumers not to upgrade if their computers are performing well. For those with newer, faster hardware capable of handling the extra load, it may make sense to get the extra features. But industry insiders note Microsoft is already working on its next-generation operating system named Whistler. That software, which Microsoft says is at least 18 months away, is expected to target both home and business users with another round of features, including interactive television.



Rick Chard for Maclean's

Checking the latest Windows. extra load

After VCRs

Major electronics manufacturers are gearing up for the holiday gift-giving season, hoping consumers will pick their new recordable DVD players. But no clear standard for capturing video signals has emerged, and shoppers will have to decide among competing technologies with confusingly similar designations—DVD-RAM, DVD-RW or DVD+RW. In the interim, TeraOptix of Singapore is promoting its Terapin CD audio-video recorder and player. For $899, buyers get a futuristic looking device able to record 74 minutes of video per compact disc. The Terapin has inputs for a TV, VCR, DVD, camcorder or set top box. It also accommodates audio from CDs, vinyl records, a PC or stereo tuner. The advantage is the discs are inexpensive, costing about $1.50 each. The drawback: image quality is inferior to DVD.

Danylo Hawaleshka

Cool Sites

How come?

How does a jet engine work? How do toilets flush? How does an enhanced phone line provide high-speed Internet access? These questions and hundreds more are answered simply and clearly, accompanied by helpful graphics and photos, at *www.howstuffworks.com*. The site was created by a former computer-science teacher in North Carolina whose name—his real name—is Marshall Brain.

Advertising Supplement



A LIFELONG PARTNERSHIP



BY CAMILLA CORNELL

If you were suffering from "female complaints" in the early 19th century, you might pop down to your local apothecary for a bottle of Madame Yale's Furitcura. If the iron it contained didn't pick you up, the whopping 40-per cent alcohol content would, at least for a few hours. For a black eye, you would be handed a slimy black leech from a special perforated jar, which you would take to the local barber for application; indeed, his red-and-white-striped pole stood for bloodletting. Or you could pick up some of Mrs. Winslow's Teething Syrup, which might silence your infant's cries with laudanum (the alcoholic tincture of opium) — perhaps permanently if you weren't judicious enough in your dosages.

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A LIFELONG PARTNERSHIP

Things have changed since those days. Now, over-the-counter medicines (OTCs) go through a rigorous testing process and must provide a detailed list of ingredients, as well as proof of their effectiveness. But, while medicines don't make it to non-prescription-drug status unless they can provide a very high level of safety, the fact remains that they are powerful remedies that need to be used carefully. That's why they're sold mainly in pharmacies with a registered pharmacist on staff. Says Ellen Mary Mills, vice-president, policy and public affairs for the Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores (CACDS): "It's critical that people understand what they're taking, why they're taking it and how to take it."

Mills points out that no member of the health-care team knows more about prescription and non-prescription medications than pharmacists, who receive four to five years of university training on the makeup of drugs, their effects on the body and their use for disease prevention and treatment. What is more, most people have a drugstore nearby, and there is a good chance it keeps longer hours than your average doctor's office. "Who's more accessible?," asks David Bloom, chief executive officer of Shoppers Drug Mart. "In some cases, your drugstore may even be open 24 hours, with a pharmacist available to help. There's no cost for that accessibility." If you have any doubt about which medication to take, or whether you might be better off seeing a doctor, Bloom urges, run it past your local pharmacist. Why? For one thing, overuse of OTC products can mask the symptoms of a serious health condition. For example, Ken Burns, a pharmacist with Errington IDA in Chelmsford, Ont., had one patient request cough medicine because he was coughing up blood. Burns calmly suggested a doctor's visit instead. Turned out the young man had pneumonia. "If you hadn't sent me, the doctor said I'd have been dead in a week," he told Burns.

Burns points out that most patients do quite well self-medicating for minor everyday complaints. "But sometimes when people are ill, their distinction between what's normal and what's not normal is a little off."

Another potential problem is the danger of drug interactions between one OTC and another prescription or non-prescription drug. For children, the elderly and

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patients who suffer from allergies, diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma and other medical problems, even non-prescription drugs can have dangerous side-effects. "Even a spoonful of sugary cough syrup can send blood-sugar levels way up for diabetics," points out John Tse, general manager of pharmacy for London Drugs in Richmond, B.C. "It's always a good idea to run an OTC past your pharmacist. It costs nothing, and it could save you from a serious illness."



A LIFELONG PARTNERSHIP

Self-care on the rise

More and more Canadians are self-medicating for minor illnesses, from colds and flu to heartburn, headaches and allergies, according to statistics compiled by the Nonprescription Drug Manufacturers Association of Canada (NDMAC) and ACNielsen. Overall, 76 per cent of Canadians reported using a non-prescription medication in the 12 months prior to July, 1997, compared with just 68 per cent the year before.

Gerry Harrington, director of public and professional affairs for NDMAC, believes the trend is positive. "Canadians are seeking out information from pharmacists, from health books and various other sources of information mostly for the purpose of self-care," he points out. As well, he says, we're less likely to run to the doctor for minor complaints. "If you've got a vaginal yeast infection," explains Rita Assouline, a pharmacist with Pharmaprix in Montreal, "and you've had it before, you know the symptoms. You can pick up an antifungal like Canesten® or Monistat® and treat yourself." The benefit of that: it saves you time and the health-care system money that is not spent on an unnecessary visit to the doctor. A 1995 Queen's Health Policy study, for example, found that simply moving non-sedating antihistamines from prescription to non-prescription status saved the Ontario government some $16 million in costs.

The kicker, however, is that you should always talk to your pharmacist about over-the-counter medications, especially before using them for the first time. "We know those medications inside and out, so we can give quite a bit of advice," says Assouline. "In the case of a vaginal yeast infection, for example, you should be checked by a doctor first, for more serious conditions, like gonorrhea, candidiasis or a bacterial infection."

Many pharmacies now track all of the drugs that patients are using, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, and herbal products. A recent research project by the Jean Coutu pharmacy chain in Quebec found that 70 per cent of the interventions pharmacists made regarding the use of over-the-counter products either improved the treatment outcome for patients or resulted in a recommendation to see a doctor.

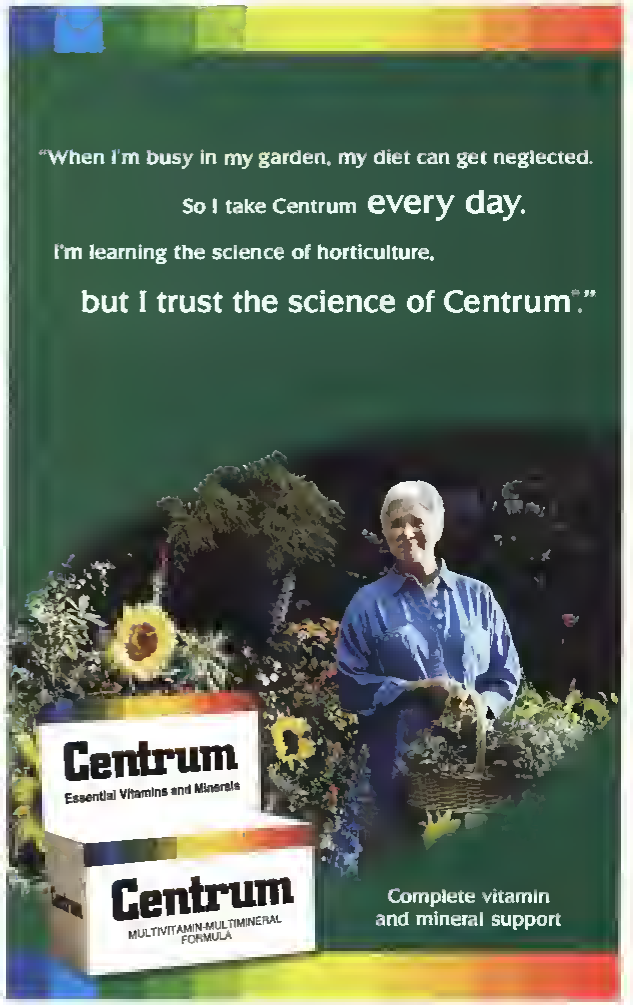
Pharmacists are the most common source of OTC info

When it comes to information on over-the-counter products, pharmacists are the health-care professionals most likely to be consulted, according to a Health Vision 98 consumer survey. Overall, 24.7 per cent of the survey respondents had talked to a pharmacist about an OTC product, compared with the 21.4 per cent who had consulted a doctor. And when it came to information on how to use a medication, more than twice as many respondents (28.8 per cent) talked to their pharmacist compared with those who spoke with their doctors (13.3 per cent).

> "Improper usage of OTC products definitely is harmful because a lot of symptoms or medical conditions may be masked by the OTC," says Simon Ng, general manager of pharmacy and health care for Zellers/Hbc Pharmacies.

Barry Peachment, director of pharmacy operations for Canada Safeway Ltd., doesn't find that surprising. "The public is beginning to recognize that pharmacists are really the experts on drugs," he says, pointing out that it's the pharmacist's job to keep abreast of information on new drug products, as well as potential drug interactions and side effects. Many pharmacies now offer private counselling areas where people can discuss sensitive issues without others overhearing. Other drugstores hire pharmacists or pharmacy students to rove the aisles of non-prescription drug products and answer any questions that come up.

Richard Mayrand, vice-president of professional activities for Jean Coutu in Quebec, points out that, with an increasing number of former prescription products moving to over-the-counter



status, the need for pharmacists to monitor purchases more closely is growing. Making the right choice can be confusing, he says, but pharmacists are there to help. "If patients have questions about OTCs, they shouldn't hesitate to ask. That's why OTCs are sold in pharmacies ... so that someone is available to offer advice."

Since 1994, the average number of times a day pharmacists report counselling on OTCs has risen from 10 to 13.

What's more, according to *Pharmacy Post*'s sixth annual "Survey on OTC Counselling and Recommendations," when a pharmacist recommends a non-prescription drug product, consumers listen. The survey found that a pharmacist recommendation resulted in a purchase 90 per cent of the time.

"We have an aging society and people are living longer than they were before for various reasons," points out David Bloom, chief executive officer of Shoppers Drug Mart. "That means governments are going to have to make that health-care dollar stretch further and one way to do that is to really take advantage of the unique knowledge and experience of community pharmacists."

Dangerous combos

Drug interactions can be lethal, but, contrary to popular belief, they are not only caused by prescription drugs interacting with other prescription drugs. Dangerous drug interactions can occur when you mix non-prescription drugs with prescription products, as well as with other over-the-counter medications, herbal products and even foods.

Here are just a few of the possible combinations that could have unwanted results:

- ASA (contained in Aspirin®) in combination with garlic tablets or white willow bark (often used to soothe arthritis pain): since all three have blood-thinning properties, a combination of the two could lead to increased bleeding or stomach problems.
- Antacids (Dioval®, Gelusil®, Maalox®) or acid suppressives (Zantac® and Losec®) and the antibiotic tetracycline: absorption of the antibiotic can be reduced by up to 90 per cent.
- Ulcer medication cimetidine (Tagamet®) and blood thinner warfarin (Coumadin®): Cimetidine prevents or slows the metabolism of warfarin, thereby enhancing its blood-thinning effect and increasing the risk of bleeding complications.
- Cold medications (containing the decongestants pseudoephedrine and phenylpropanolamine) and St. John's Wort (a herb commonly used to treat depression): taking them together could lead to a sharp rise in blood pressure.

TLC for the common cold

Caused by any of about 200 viruses, the common cold has proved stubbornly resistant to a cure. "A cold generally lasts about a week, whether you treat it or not," says Katherine Christidis, regional pharmacy operations manager for Zellers/8ay Pharmacies. "And it can be a long, miserable week." Antibiotics won't help, because they work only on infections caused by bacteria, while colds are caused by viruses. "But there are a number of over-the-counter drugs that can relieve your symptoms," says Christidis. Here are her tips for coping with colds:

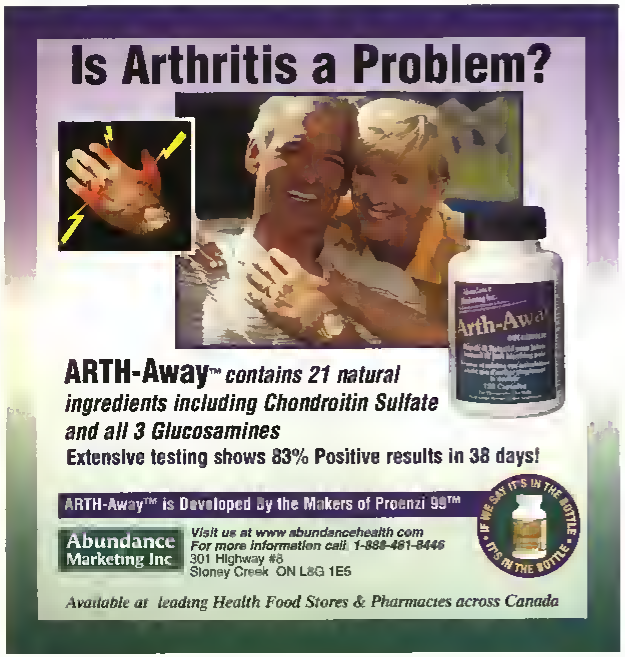
- If you have a stuffy nose and pain in your sinuses, you might want to use a nasal decongestant to help you breathe easier, and either acetaminophen, ASA or ibuprofen can help relieve head and muscle aches.
- Look carefully at the cough medication you choose, suggests Christidis. If you have a dry hacking cough, you're better off with a cough suppressant (look for "DM" on the label). For a wet cough, try an expectorant to loosen phlegm and clear your breathing passages.
- If you're buying a multiple-symptom cough remedy, look carefully at the ingredients to avoid double-dosing. "Many cold and flu medications will have Tylenol® in them," points out Christidis. "So you want to make sure you don't take additional Tylenol® on top of that."
- Other things you can do: stop smoking, drink plenty of liquids, gargle with warm salt water, use a vaporizer to keep the air moist and loosen mucus, and get plenty of rest.

Control the aches and pains of osteoarthritis

Arthritis affects some 2.7 million Canadians and costs the health-care system about $17.8 billion a year, second only to heart disease. And yet, says Denis Morrice, president of the Arthritis Society, "arthritis is still seen as aches and pains that are inevitable with old age. It's not considered a priority." Morrice believes that will change as more of Canada's nine million baby boomers begin to reach age 50 over the next few years, and more and more people understand the suffering firsthand.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for the most common kind of arthritis – osteoarthritis – a wearing away of the cartilage of the joints, either because of injury or overuse. Read on, however, for some tips on minimizing its effects.

Exercise regularly. Why? It will help keep your weight under control, decrease your risk of developing arthritis and take pressure off your joints. As well, by building up your



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muscles, ligaments and tendons, you will bolster your "biological shock absorbers," protecting joints from further injury. Finally, exercise can release endorphins in the brain to make you feel better.

Try a supplement. Glucosamine and condroitin sulfate supplements have been touted as a "miracle cure" by some. Both substances occur naturally in cartilage and other connective tissues and serve to repair and protect them.

Study results have been mixed, but Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital looked at the effects of glucosamine alone and concluded that, although it's not a miracle cure, it may ease the pain and discomfort for some patients. Other potential sources of relief include devil's claw (an anti-inflammatory herb) and fish oil (perhaps because of the vitamin D).

"The demands from government force a pharmacy to be a commodity business — the more prescriptions we fill, the more money we make," says Barry Peachment, director of pharmacy operations for Canada Safeway Ltd. "We would like to see pharmacists compensated for the real service they offer, which is counselling patients, not dispensing pills."

Capsaicin cream. Made of the same substance that puts the heat in hot peppers, this cream may have a mildly beneficial effect when rubbed on arthritic joints. Give it a chance, though, warns Maria Ton, a staff pharmacist with London Drugs in Delta, B.C. Advocates believe the cream interferes with the neurotransmitters that transmit pain, but it takes at least three days of steady use before you will feel the effects. If you have sensitive skin, you should avoid it.

Acetaminophen. This is still one of the best choices to ease arthritis pain, says Ton. The only mistake people make, she says, is that they don't take a high enough dosage and then "they give up, saying it doesn't work for them." Ton recommends taking two extra-strength tablets (about 1,000 mg) every four to six hours or as needed.

Anti-inflammatories. Originally it was believed that there was no inflammation involved in osteoarthritis, but recent research suggests that may not be the case. Ibuprofen has the dual effect of relieving pain and inflammation. Still, for patients with a sensitive stomach or those who may suffer a drug interaction, acetaminophen may well be the best choice.

Guardian angels in white coats

Five years ago, Paul Gary Lepman, of Iroquois, Ont., came down with a killer cold. After a course of medication and three weeks of lozenges and cough syrup, the cold was better, but Lepman's sore throat still persisted. "I knew it wasn't normal," says the former deep-sea diver. "I'm not the type to hang on to a cold like that."

Over the next week, Lepman stuffed down his concern and went through every kind of lozenge his local Gilmer Pharmacy carried, setting off alarms with proprietor-pharmacists Doug and Tracey Gilmer. "Anytime an illness lingers on and doesn't resolve itself, you should see a doctor," says Doug. "Sometimes, over-the-counter products will mask the symptoms of a more serious illness."

Both he and Tracey, his sister, urged Lepman to get a second opinion. "They told me, 'Don't let that go.' " And he didn't. A biopsy at Ottawa Civic Hospital indicated that Lepman had throat cancer and he was given just three to six months to live. His only hope, a new and unproven surgery. "I had nothing to lose," says Lepman. "I went for it." After 14 to 16 hours of surgery, he emerged battered, but not beaten. Doug and Tracey were around to fill his post-surgery requirements, and not surprisingly, said Lepman, "I trusted their advice at all times."

That was 5 1/2 years ago. "I'm still going strong," says Lepman. "Last week, I was down at the cancer clinic and the doctors don't want to see me for another year. But I have no doubt that if I hadn't listened to Doug and Tracey, I wouldn't be here today." ■

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Star-maker machinery

Hollywood's elite come to Toronto to launch their films

It was the *Godfather* family reunion that never happened. **Robert De Niro**, **Al Pacino** and **Robert Duvall** all touched down at the Toronto International Film Festival last week, each launching a different movie. The three erstwhile wise guys were among the horde of stars who descended on the city for the festival's 25th-anniversary edition (Sept. 7 to 16). But they passed each other like ships in the night.

"I never see those guys anymore," sighed Duvall, the day after the première of *A Shot at Glory*, in which he plays a Scottish soccer coach with a thick Highland brogue. The 69-year-old actor takes pride in the fact that director **Michael Corrente** cast professional players in the movie, notably Scottish soccer star **Ally McCoist**. "With that Pacino movie, you couldn't follow the game," adds Duvall, taking a shot at **Oliver Stone**'s 1999 football flick, *Any Given Sunday*. "It was all tight angles—the geography of the game was never there. They should have got the real NFL experts."

Like Duvall, Pacino was at the festival to promote a small indie film—the actor directs himself as a destitute novelist in *Chinese Coffee*. But De Niro showed up to première a Hollywood product, *Men of Honor*, co-starring **Cuba Gooding Jr.** as a navy diver. Duvall, meanwhile, says he's excited about **Francis Ford Coppola**'s soon-to-be-released recut version of *Apocalypse Now*. Reinstated footage from the actor's legendary "I love the smell of napalm in the morning" scene shows his character interrupt his surfing to rescue a Vietnamese baby. 'But he probably killed the parents five minutes earlier," adds the actor.

Among the hits at this year's festival, the crowd-pleasers included *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, **Ang Lee**'s Mandarin martial arts spectacle, *Shadow of the Vampire*, starring **Willem Dafoe** as an actor who literally sucks the blood from his co-stars; *Billy Elliot*, a *Rocky*-like tale of a miner's son who becomes a ballet prodigy; and *Almost Famous*, **Cameron Crowe**'s portrait of a rock journalist as a young man.

In *Almost Famous*, **Goldie Hawn**'s 21-year-old daughter, **Kate Hudson**, stars as chick-with-the-band Penny Lane—a role originally turned down by Canadian actress **Sarah Polley** (who co-stars with **Sean Penn** in another festival première, *The Weight of Water*). To prepare for the role, Hudson says she immersed herself in music by **Joni Mitchell** and **Bob Dylan**. "I listened to *Visions of Johanna* every day before I went in to work," she says. "Track three on Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde*. It's amazing. Also *People's Parties* by Joni Mitchell—I danced around the room to that song during the audition."

Playing a karaoke singer in *Duets*, **Gwyneth Paltrow** showed up with co-star **Huey Lewis** and her father, director **Bruce Paltrow**, to launch the movie. Gwyneth proved she can sing, and Lewis proved he can act, but the script was painfully off-key. Not that it mattered to the paparazzi, who staked out Paltrow's hotel, trying in vain to catch her together with former flame **Ben Affleck**. At the



Gere mobbed crossing the street from one hotel to another



Mieko Shiraishi/Maclean's

Paltrow: painfully off-key script



Clockwise from left. Hudson; De Niro and Gooding; Pacino, Duvall. in junket interviews, news conferences and red-carpet photo calls, the festival saw dozens of celebrities come and go, flaunting their wares and fielding questions while attempting to retain their dignity







People

last minute, Affleck slipped into the seat beside her at the première, keeping rumours of a reunion alive.

The festival saw dozens of celebrities come and go, flaunting their wares while attempting to retain their dignity. **Richard Gere** was mobbed as he crossed the street from one hotel to another, where he fielded questions about how he prepared for his role as a nice-guy gynecologist in **Robert Altman**'s *Dr. T and the Women*. And the crusty Altman jumped to defend **Farrah Fawcett** when a reporter asked how her nutty character in the movie "dovetails" with her public image—she plays a deranged woman who strips naked in a fountain at the mall. "I don't think I'm anything like her," said Fawcett, who has posed nude in *Playboy* and behaved bizarrely on *Letterman*.

Away from the junket interviews, news conferences and red-carpet photo calls, the stars tried to relax at private dinners. While attentive waiters hovered around her like hummingbirds, *Sex and the City*'s **Sarah Jessica Parker** devoured seafood and smoked cigarettes (only her character has quit) with co-stars from **David Mamet**'s *State and Main*, including **Alec Baldwin** and **Philip Seymour Hoffman**. Parker, who talks like a better-scripted version of her *Sex and the City* character—even if her favourite epithet is "friggin' "—provoked discussions on topics ranging from TV's *Survivor* to **Bill Clinton**'s farewell speech at the Democratic convention, which she found inspiring—Parker watched it from backstage.

But private parties are not always private. Duvall was the guest of honour at a small but lavish reception at a Rosedale home, a deco mansion on a ravine that Don Starr, a London-based Canadian film financier, treats as his Toronto pied-à-terre. Out front, a phalanx of uniformed attendants provided valet parking while the neighbourhood rich kids buzzed around on chrome scooters. Duvall arrived, strolled past the artificial waterfall to the party—which was taking place on a wooden deck erected over a 12-m backyard pool—and was startled to find four TV cameras lying in wait. He didn't expect them, not at a posh residential party. But for 10 days, at Canada's answer to Cannes, sometimes there was simply no escape.

Brian D. Johnson



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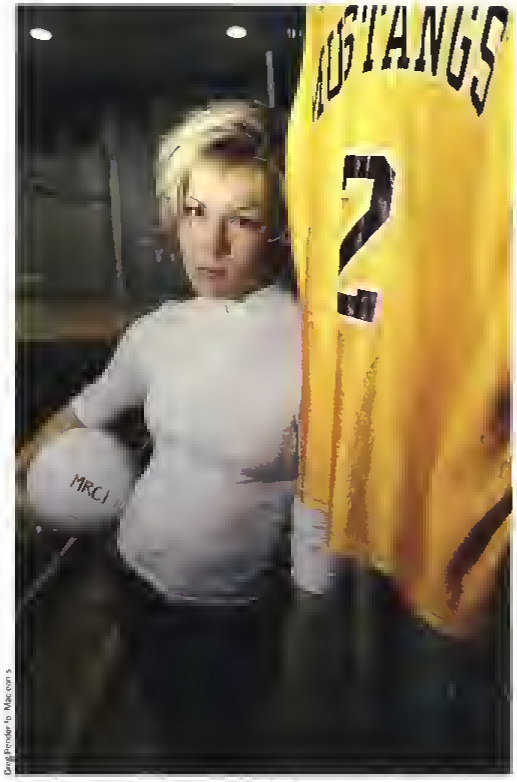
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After-school boycott

As tensions flare over budget cuts and work conditions, extracurricular activities are increasingly under threat

By John Schofield

On typical autumn afternoons, and on into the evening, Saskatoon's Mount Royal Collegiate hums with youthful energy. From 3:30 until 9 p.m., five days a week, teams fill the athletic fields and the gym to practise football, volleyball and soccer. Members of the school's 20 clubs meet to enjoy everything from drama to electronics, while the musically inclined play tunes or sing songs. For decades, the entire school has welcomed the new Grade 9 class with pep rallies, a dance and the "freshie" football game. But this fall, life at Mount Royal has been anything but normal. A lingering labour dispute prompted teachers across the province to launch a work-to-rule campaign, and extracurricular activities screeched to a halt. Last Friday, negotiators announced a tentative agreement, much to the relief of both students and staff. "We usually start the year with a real bang," says principal Brian Hilsen. "But take away clubs and sports and it's very different. It seems very strange."



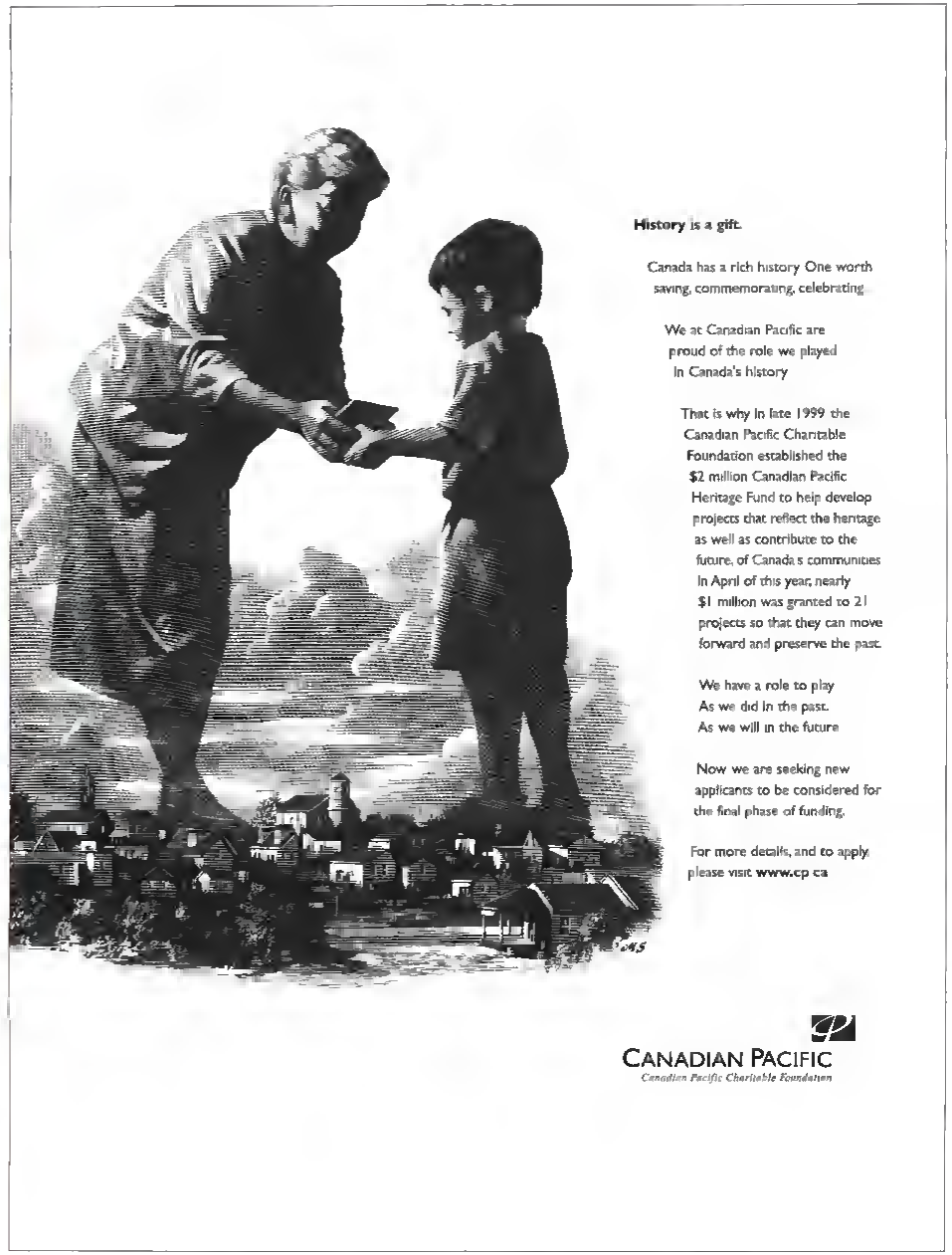
Greg Pender for Maclean's

Margach, a player with dreams of winning an athletic scholarship

For many students, after-school sports and clubs are the very essence of school life. They foster talent, confidence and friendship. And teachers have traditionally shared those experiences, volunteering hours of extra time to make them a reality. But as tensions flare over budget cuts and working conditions, extracurricular activities are increasingly under threat. In Saskatchewan, several schools docked teachers' pay for joining the job action. And although the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation promised an immediate end to sanctions, union officials say that after-school clubs and sports remain a growing burden. "This agreement doesn't change anything," says Derwin Crozier-Smith, the federation's general secretary. "I just think more teachers are burning out and saying, 'I can't do what I have to do in the classroom *and* extracurricular activities.'"

Ontario high-school teachers, contending with a new curriculum and a law requiring them to carry an extra half-course a year, have all but abandoned after-school activities amid provincewide contract talks. In return, the province's Conservative government has threatened to use legislation to force teachers to supervise clubs and sports. In Toronto, frustrated teachers are threatening a full-scale strike if an agreement is not reached by Oct. 2.

For many students, a prolonged boycott of extracurricular options would virtually ruin the year. In Saskatoon, that frustration bubbled over when 700 students converged on provincial cabinet offices early last week, demanding an end to the dispute. The protest followed a march organized, in



part, by Jennifer Margach, a Grade 12 student at Mount Royal and an avid volleyball player The 17-year-old, who devotes more than 10 hours a week to the sport, feared that her dreams of winning an athletic scholarship would be dashed if teachers continued their job action She also knows that her achievements outside class could help her get accepted into a competitive university program "This is a big part of our lives," says Margach, who plans to study journalism 'And when it's taken away, we lose out '

No one denies the fundamental importance of extracurricular activities Studies consistently show that students who participate in school sports and clubs have better attendance records and higher marks A 1997 report by the Alberta Schools Athletic Association found that students involved in school sports were less likely to smoke or use drugs, and had lower rates of teen pregnancy "Instead of walking through the teen years in a bored fashion, their spirit changes," says Dona Matthews, a lecturer at the Uttiversity of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and a specialist in adolescent development. "They begin to see themselves as more competent, and that translates into them doing better."

For many teachers, the decision to withdraw from after-school activities is a painful one Ed Dillon, who has supervised school sports for 21 years, freely admits he enjoys coaching more than teaching But this month, the business studies teacher at Adam Scott Collegiate and Vocational Institute in Peterborough, Ont., made the difficult decision to hang up his cleats "I find it very hard to look my students in the eyes and tell them I'm not coaching this year,"



Rob Gilbert/Globe and Mail Staff Photographer

Dillon: a veteran coach has chosen to hang up his cleats

Studies consistently show that students who participate in school sports and clubs have better attendance records and higher marks

says Dillon, 47. "But I also recognize that I just can't do it."

It all comes down to time. Until this fall, Dillon used one of his four 75-minute periods every day to prepare lessons Now, to fulfil the terms of the government's new legislation, he is teaching all four periods Prep time and marking have been pushed into the evening. As a department head, Dillon wrestles with even more paperwork On top of that, he notes, class sizes are rising Add coaching to the mix, and the workweek can top 60 or 70 hours It makes it difficult for Dillon to spend time with his wife, Karen, and three children, aged 4 to 7 "If the government tells me I have to coach at school, what do they *not* want me to do?" he asks. "My marking? See my family? Sleep? Something has to give."

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In the United States, many school boards have preserved extracurricular programs by offering to pay for supervision One Rhode Island school board pays an extra $8,575 to the head football coach, $6,275 to the girls' basketball coach, and $4,198 to their counterparts overseeing the golf and tennis teams On the non athletic side, the adviser to the students' council is paid an extra $6,275 "To do these jobs, you need a certain level of expertise," says Marsha Berger, deputy director of the educational issues department at the Washington-based American Federation of Teachers "To expect them to do these add-ons without being compensated is a form of exploitation."

For the moment, compensation seems unlikely in Canada's cash-strapped public school system Nor is it likely that activities will be off-loaded to private organizations, a move that could eliminate access for families of lesser means. A more realistic alternative may be a community-based approach, with parent and teacher volunteers using school facilities to sustain extracurricular activities Many Canadian parents are already pitching in, raising funds for field trips, sports equipment and a host of other items—including computers and library books At the elementary level alone, Ontario parents raised an estimated $28 million last year, according to a report by People for Education, a provincial parents' group "For elementary students, extracurricular activities are still thriving," says Annie Kidder, a spokeswoman for the group "But there is a concern for how long "

In Ontario, students are wondering whether the drought will continue While many may not blame their teachers for bowing out, the decision has strained traditionally comfortable relationships, and teachers like Dillon are feeling the sting Both sides are casting accusing eyes at government, questioning whether after-school activities can survive in a system so battered by cuts Teachers still face the threat of being forced by law to supervise after-school activities—a notion that Dillon feels is patently ridiculous "What type of effort do you get from human beings when you *make* them do something?" he asks "Some of our coaches have done it for 30 years—because they love it " For now, both teachers and students are standing on the sidelines, deprived of one of autumn's most precious joys



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Sydney Sizzle

As the Games began, Canadian athletes suffered heartbreak—and tasted gold





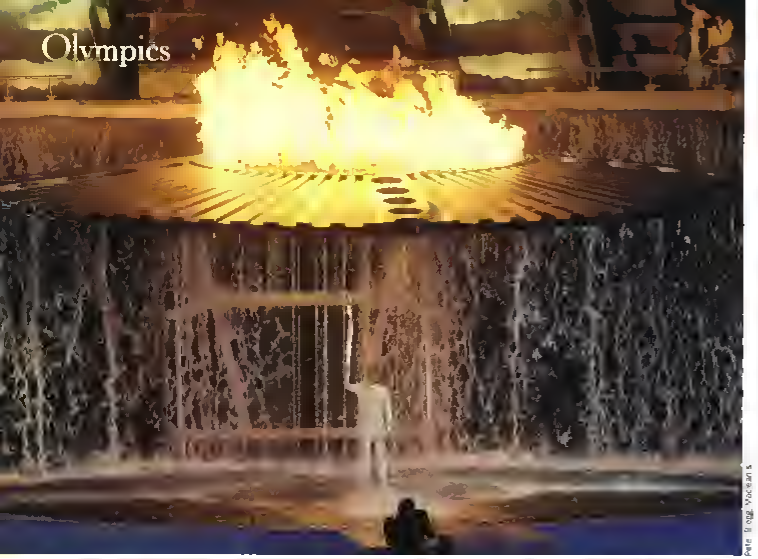
By Andrew Phillips and James Deacon

First the fantasy: a giant jellyfish, a fire-breathing mechanical horse and a little girl swimming in the air, suspended by wires 30 m above a crowd of 110,000.

Then the symbolism: Cathy Freeman, 27-year-old runner and Australia's most celebrated Aboriginal, seeming to walk on water as she lights the Olympic cauldron that will burn throughout Sydney's Games of the millennium.

Next, the bracing reality: a plunge into the chill waters of Sydney harbour as 48 women compete in the new Olympic sport of triathlon, a gruelling combination of swimming, cycling and running. Canada had high hopes, with Carol Montgomery of North Vancouver looking for a medal after a sensational season. But as she began the third lap of her bike race through downtown Sydney, Montgomery collided with two other cyclists and went down in a heap. She was out—and may miss her other event, a 10,000-

Opening extravaganza, Whitfield with medal (above): 'proud to be Canadian'



Freeman after lighting the Olympic cauldron, Brunet marching in (below), tests

Despite strong contenders, Canadians would not predict the medal haul

m race on Sept. 27. After so much work, it was tough to take. "I prepared myself for the worst—and the worst happened," she said. "But I just don't think it's fair."

And finally, redemption: the only male member of the triathlon team, Simon Whitfield of Kingston, Ont., came from behind in the men's event on Sunday morning to capture Canada's first gold of the Games. "I've dreamed of this my entire life," said Whitfield, 25. "I can't tell you how proud I am to be Canadian."

In fact, the Games will be the ultimate test for the 10,700 athletes from 199 countries—including the rest of Canada's squad of 311. Last week, they could only wait. Rower Emma Robinson of Winnipeg put aside thoughts of her recent battle with thyroid cancer and focused on her bid for a medal with partner Theresa Luke of 100 Mile House, B.C. Kayaker Caroline Brunet of Lac Beauport, Que., dealt with the excitement of carrying Canada's flag during the opening ceremony—all the while worrying about tricky winds at the Olympic regatta centre as she prepared to compete for two medals on Oct. 1, the final day of the Games. And diver Alexandre Despatie of Laval, Que., at 15 the youngest Canadian athlete, just tried to keep the jitters away as he rubbed shoulders with the world's best at the Olympic Village. "Being in the Village is great," he said, "but sometimes it's hard to keep your focus."



Sydney's Games will be a crucial test, too, for the beleaguered Olympic movement itself. Behind it is the uncomfortable memory of the 1996 Atlanta Games, plagued by organizational miscues and a deadly terrorist bomb. Add to that corruption scandals that emerged from Salt Lake City's campaign to stage the Winter Games of 2002, the ongoing fight against illegal drug use, and the burdensome size of the event. Ahead lie the 2004 Summer Games in Athens, already the subject of anxious speculation about tardy preparations and terrorist threats. Between the chaos of Atlanta, the cloud over Salt Lake and the uncertainty of Athens, Sydney is the Olympics' best chance for a flat-out triumph.

In the early days, at least, the signs were good. Australians, after casting a skeptical eye on the Games, finally embraced them. Hundreds of thousands cheered the Olympic torch as it was carried 27,000 km through outback, suburbs and surf to the spanking new Stadium Australia where Freeman lit the cauldron—a poignant gesture of reconciliation with the country's neglected Aboriginal people. The opening ceremony, which told Australia's story from its Aboriginal beginnings to recent waves of immigrants from around the world, was pronounced a triumph. In Sydney's seedy Kings Cross district, even the prostitutes and drag queens who patrol the nighttime streets crowded into bars to cheer on every scene. "For freshly patriotic Australians," Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* wrote on the morning after, "it was like looking at yourself in the mirror—and really liking what you saw."

It helps to have winners—especially in a sports-mad country that still honours Olympic medallists from decades past. On the first full day of competition, Australia already had winners, and a new national hero in its 17-year-old swim-



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Sydney is the Olympic movement's best chance for a flat-out triumph

ming sensation, Ian Thorpe. "The Thorpedo," famed for his size-17 feet that power him through the pool, won two gold medals, one by setting a new world record in the 400-m freestyle.

All that was almost—but not quite—enough to chase away the shadows over the Olympic movement. The IOC made sweeping reforms last year after an investigation of the Salt Lake City bribery scandal by its then-vice-president, Richard Pound of Montreal. But on the eve of the Sydney Games, it was clear the problems had not disappeared. Australian immigration officials refused to allow two IOC members—one from Uzbekistan and one from Hong Kong—to enter the country because of their suspected criminal backgrounds.

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The women's triathlon. 'I prepared myself for the worst—and the worst happened'

The other danger to the Games is the ever-present possibility that some athletes will be found using illegal performance-enhancing drugs. The new threat this year is EPO, a synthetic form of the hormone erythropoietin, which increases the production of red blood cells and improves endurance. Drug testers in Sydney will use a combination of two tests—one for blood and one for urine—to detect athletes using EPO. But they acknowledge that it can screen out only those who have used the drug in the three days preceding a test, a loophole that may allow unscrupulous competitors to escape detection. In Sydney, the World Anti-Doping Agency is mounting its biggest-ever operation to detect drug use. And the athlete who took the Olympic oath on behalf of all competitors at the opening ceremony, Rechelle Hawkes of Australia, added a pledge to practise "sport without doping and without drugs."

For Canada, the Games are rife with possibilities. Other strong medal contenders include Brunet in kayaking, Robinson and Luke in rowing, Marianne Limpert of Fredericton in swimming; Anne Montminy of Montreal in diving; as well as sprinters Bruny Surin and Donovan Bailey. But the operative word for those leading Canada's team at Sydney is caution. In Atlanta, Canadians won 22 medals—three gold, 11 silver and eight bronze. This time out, Canada's *chef de mission* (or team boss), Diane Jones Konihowski, flatly refuses to say how much hardware her athletes hope to bring home. They simply don't need the pressure, she says. Konihowski knows of what she speaks; at the Montreal Games in 1976 she was a strong medal hopeful in pentathlon, but fell short. "There was huge pressure on me, and I blew it," she said. "I let the pressure get to me, and I'm not going to do that to this team."

Konihowski and others at the top of Canadian amateur sport may have other reasons for refusing to play a guessing game about medals. They have seen that better funding produces better performances and more medals. More financial help for athletes and better training facilities in the 1980s helped to produce record medal hauls at the Games of 1992, 1994 and 1996. Privately, many sports officials fear the opposite may now be true—that the massive funding cutbacks of the 1990s may begin to take a toll in Sydney.

More tests will come this week. On the swim team, the burden of medal expectations is not borne by young, rising stars but by the same veterans who won three medals four years ago. In rowing, competition from emerging powers means that Canada may well earn fewer medals than the six it took home from Atlanta. And recent hamstring injuries to 100-m sprint stars Surin and Bailey raise questions as to whether Canada can match its track triumphs of four years ago.

Still, their 4 x 100-m relay partner Glentoy Gilbert says his teammates cannot be counted out when the sprinters take the starting line. "Bruny's got that attitude now that he can put it all together," says Gilbert. "Donovan trains well, but when he competes he's on a completely different level." At the same time, strong Canadian entries in other sports could make up for any shortfalls. The women's water polo team and the two women's synchronized diving pairs could all finish on the medal podium.

And, as at every Games, the test comes not only in victory, but in abject defeat. Carol Montgomery, still cradling her injured left hand after her devastating triathlon crash, was clearly upset at her own fare and at race organizers who laid out a narrow course over rutted roads that made collisions more likely. But, she was asked, was it worth all the sweat and tears to get to Sydney? Of course, she replied in a heartbeat: "I made it to the Olympic Games. I'll always be an Olympian." m

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ROGERS MEDIA

Canada's coaching crisis

By Catherine Roberts



Peter Bregg/Maclean's

Morrow (left) with rowers Emma Robinson and Theresa Luke: funding problems

As he stood in the hot sun on Australia's Gold Coast, shouting instructions during a training camp, Canadian track coach Brent McFarlane had finally fulfilled his dream of coaching an Olympic team. It wasn't easy: he not only had to teach his athletes, but he also had to raise money for their training—including a donation he solicited from an American millionaire. McFarlane is not alone. Unlike their U.S. counterparts, many of whom work full time and are well paid, Canadian coaches often have to work long hours for little money. "The entire Canadian athletics budget," says the 52-year-old McFarlane, "is just over $3 million. Compared with other Western nations, we're funded like a Third World country."

Even without the funding problems, coaching in Canada is a difficult business. Coaches sacrifice their family time, working 60 to 70 hours a week while juggling full-time jobs. Not surprisingly, many quality coaches are leaving the country, or just quitting. And many high-profile athletes train elsewhere: sprinters Donovan Bailey and Bruny Surin both train with Dan Pfaff in Austin, Tex. "In Canada," says Al Morrow, head coach of the women's rowing team, "we have an athlete-centred support program and I think, generally, that's what you want. But that does no good if you don't have any coaches around."

> Many quality coaches are leaving the country—or just quitting

No one knows the funding problem better than McFarlane. After taking over as head track-and-field coach in 1997, the grade-school teacher saw his Olympic budget cut from $160,000 to $128,000 to $111,000 in less than two years. The way he figured it, he was going to fall $60,000 short for the training and logistics of ensuring that 41 athletes, six coaches and 10 medical staff were in place and ready for Sydney. So for two years, McFarlane and his wife, Vicki, solicited donations throughout Canada. They sent out 2,000 pledge forms and received only six back—a total of $650. He then decided to donate $30,000 from the proceeds of his latest book—but the book was not printed in time to finance the Olympic excursion.

It was a meeting with the American millionaire that did the trick. McFarlane had been coaching Matthew, the 14-year-old son of Mark McIlvane, a senior vice-president at Clarent Corp. in suburban Chicago. Over lunch, McFarlane explained his funding troubles. Afterward, McIlvane wrote a cheque for $10,000 (U.S.)—which he later raised to $20,000. "It should be appalling to every Canadian," said McFarlane, "that an American businessman wrote a cheque in a parking lot because he saw the need for Canadians to have a fair chance to compete at the Olympics."

Winter Olympics coaches have it no easier. Daniele Sauvageau, 38, is a Montreal police sergeant and a longtime hockey coach. In 1994, she was named to the coaching roster of the women's national team. She ended up taking a year of unpaid leave to train for the 1997 world championships and the 1998 Nagano Olympics. For that she received about $20,000—less than one-third her regular salary—and lost 12 months of police benefits, pensions and seniority. "I'm torn between my career as police officer and my love for coaching hockey," she says. "Even if I was offered a full-time job, I couldn't survive on the salary."

Responding to the coaching crisis, Ottawa has committed to supporting more full-time coaches, primarily at the seven National Sport Centres throughout the country. Modelled on the Australian system, the centres offer strong coaching at first-rate facilities, with promising results: since the first one opened in Calgary in 1994, Canada has won a steadily increasing number of medals at each successive Games.

But critics point out that Ottawa spends $3.4 million a year on the centres and supports 130 full-time coaches, by contrast, Germany, with nearly three times the population of Canada, has 20 similar centres receiving 10 times the funding, and it supports nearly 400 full-time coaches. As Canada's team does battle in Sydney, the question is whether future generations of athletes will get the top-flight training they need. m

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photography and design by Carolyn Kane

Canada's Barenaked Ladies are ridingh with a new album, a documentary—and a new maturity



Peter Bregg/Maclean's

Page (left), Creeggan, Stewart, Robertson, Hearn shedding some of the irony and showing a more serious, emotional side

Ladies on Top

By Nicholas Jennings

It was like an IQ test question asking which was the apple among the oranges. In the summer, Canada's Barenaked Ladies had been booked to play Chicago's Rockfest at the city's motor speedway. But the fun-loving popsters found themselves sharing top billing with heavy-metal road warriors Metallica and white-trash rapper Kid Rock. As soon as the Ladies hit the stage, rap-metal fans in the audience realized that this group didn't share their "Rage Against Anything" credo. First there was booing, followed by dozens of middle fingers being thrust angrily in the air. Things turned uglier as the rabble started hurling beer bottles and homophobic insults towards the stage. Drummer Tyler Stewart recalls that he quickly went from being "a little nervous" to "very scared."

Steven Page and Ed Robertson, however, took a perverse delight in trying to win over the crowd. While Page began singing The Kinks' *You Really Got Me*, Robertson invited a heckler onstage to strum the song's power chords on his guitar. It worked: boos suddenly turned to cheers. By the time the Ladies launched into their hard-rocking hit *The Old Apartment*, the most obnoxious dissenters were crowd-surfing above the mosh pit. "We were lucky not to get hurt," says Page, "but I got a total rush out of it. It was like all these rocker guys who called me faggot in high school were now in front giving me the finger. For us to get them singing along really was a case of revenge of the nerds."

It's not the first time that the once-geeky Ladies have proven their detractors wrong. Formed in 1988 and then largely written off at home by the mid-'90s as a novelty act whose time was up, the group—which also includes bassist Jim Creeggan and keyboardist Kevin Hearn, who replaced Creeggan's brother Andy in 1995—headed south only to find greater fame. American audiences welcomed the band's witty, melodic pop. Although the Ladies' U.S. breakthrough came with its 1996 live recording, *Rock Spectacle*, it was the next album that catapulted them well into pop's upper echelons. Featuring the hyperactive rap of *One Week*, a No. 1 hit on the U.S. *Billboard* charts, the four-million selling *Stunt* established the Ladies as superstars capable of filling arenas and stadiums from Portland, Ore., to Poughkeepsie, N.Y.—which they did for much of the next two years.

An even busier year lies ahead. Having recovered from the shock of stardom and, more significant, the

recent near-death experience of Hearn, who successfully battled leukemia, the Ladies seem ready for the challenge. First up is this month's release of the band's ambitious fifth studio album, *Maroon*, produced by Don Was, who has worked with such A-list clients as Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones and Bonnie Raitt (page 69). Then, following this week's appearance on the MuchMusic Video Awards in Toronto, the band kicks off a major U.S. tour (it performs in Toronto on Nov. 24), and will tour Canada in early 2001). The Ladies are also making American TV appearances—on everything from *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* to *Charmed*. A further boost will come with the release of *Barenaked in America*, a documentary by Canadian-born actor Jason Priestley, which opens in U.S. cities on Sept. 29 and across Canada next month, and an authorized biography by Paul Myers, brother of Mike (*Austin Powers*) Myers.

This fall also marks a new stage for the band. Until now, the Barenaked Ladies have, as their name suggests, been mostly about irony. Page and Robertson first became friends during high school in the Toronto suburb of Scarborough—often dismissed by locals as "Scarberia"—which also helped shape the absurdist sensibility of Mike Myers. Once the Ladies came together, they quickly became the class clowns of pop, satirizing suburbia and such phenomena as fast food, high-school alienation and an assortment of cultural icons. The quintet accompanied their quirky lyrics with self-mocking fashions like bowling shirts and Bermuda shorts. But in 1992, Toronto mayor June Rowlands didn't get the joke, banning the group from performing in front of City Hall because their name "objectifies women."

With their conquest of the U.S. market, the Ladies proved they weren't a goofy pop-music blip

Now, the Ladies are all in their late 20s or early 30s. Three of them, Page, Robertson and Stewart, are married with children. And they are taking a more personal, serious approach to their music. They have decided, as *Rolling Stone* noted in a recent, favourable review of *Maroon*, to "start making sense." Even the City of Toronto has come around: this week Mayor Mel Lastman is giving the Ladies the key to the city, and for the first time since they were blacklisted they are performing outside City Hall.

In an interview, Page, Stewart and Hearn reflected on the band's new outlook and where it fits in the current musical climate. With the Chicago experience still fresh in his mind, Page, 30, is troubled by the current rap-metal trend, because it feeds and fuels alienated youth. "There's so much anger out there now, whether it's Eminem or Limp Bizkit, but it's so aimless," says Page, the father of a three-year-old and an 18-month-old. "People are venting all this rage, but they can't be bothered directing it at government because they don't even know what the government does."

The new album contains few of the cultural references (Kraft Dinner, Yoko Ono, *The X-Files*) that have characterized the band's past work. Instead, the songs tend to be more thoughtful. "Some of it is born out of frustration with the glibness of modern culture and knowing how much we participated in that," concedes Page. "As a songwriter, I asked myself whether I've put enough of my heart in the music in the past, or whether I've spent too much time trying to shield the emotional side of things. One of the themes of the album is about taking action—going out and doing something, instead of sitting and talking about it."

Page and Robertson have, in fact, lent their faces to an information campaign sponsored by the nonprofit organization Artists Against Racism. And recently, along with Stewart, they made a series of public-service announcements on behalf of World Vision, the Third World relief agency. However, Robertson believes that aligning oneself with causes can be a double-edged sword. "People are so skeptical these days," he says. "You want to help out, but then cynics question your motivation. It's like Sting and the Amazon. The guy's trying to use his celebrity to help save the rainforest, and everyone's making fun of him." That conundrum became the subject of *Helicopters*, one of the strongest songs on the new album.

Hearn's illness has also clearly influenced the group's outlook. According to Paul Myers, a musician who first met the Ladies in 1990 when his group shared bills with them in Toronto clubs, Hearn's leukemia triggered a profound shift in the band's thinking and gave them a humility in the midst of their newfound celebrity. "They stopped kidding about," says Myers, whose book *Barenaked Ladies: Public Stunts and Private Stories* will be published this fall. "They're still making wisecracks, but they're much wiser."

While Hearn, now 31, was battling cancer—he went into remission after receiving a bone-marrow transplant from his younger brother, Sean—Robertson was struggling to cope with the havoc that fame had wreaked on his personal life. As the lead singer on the smash hit *One Week*, Robertson found himself increasingly in the spotlight. "There's no way to prepare for the way people suddenly start to view you and the privacy that you lose," says the 29-year-old, who has been married for six years to homemaker Natalie Herbert, with whom he has a four- and one-year-old. "All of that affects you in such a staggering way. It's really difficult to keep your feet on the ground and your head together." Last year, Robertson was pictured in *Rolling Stone* in the company of porn actress Jen Teal and was later the subject of reports about marital problems. But he insists that he had an innocent backstage encounter with Teal and that his marriage is back on solid ground. "Those sorts of stories always dog the touring rock star, and stuff gets read into them. But I've worked hard to get my life back together."



The band, with Andy Creeggan (far right), singing *O Canada* at a 1993 hockey game and in 1992 (below left) struggles with the pressures of fame

Rebuilding is also a theme of Priestley's documentary, which follows the band on part of its American *Stunt* tour. With Hearn out of commission, the Ladies recruited keyboardist Chris Brown, formerly of the Bourbon Tabernacle Choir. Although the film captures the improvisational thrill of Barenaked concerts and the giddy devotion at tailgate parties, Hearn's illness casts a shadow. By the time the Ladies bring their recovering keyboardist, bald from chemotherapy, to perform the ballad *Call and Answer* with them in Buffalo, the stage has been set for an emotional finale. "Please welcome our hero," Page declares, "the strongest man we know—Kevin Hearn."

Despite their image as rock 'n' roll jesters, the Ladies have always had darker songs dating back to their first major-label album, 1992's *Gordon*. Death, in fact, has been a recurring theme. But that sense of mortality is particularly acute on *Maroon*. *Tonight Is the Night I Fell Asleep at the Wheel* graphically describes a fatal car accident. Page says the song came to him from memories of commuting between Toronto and London, Ont., where his wife-to-be was living at the time. But Robertson reveals a more direct connection. "I lost a brother in a motorcycle



Songs of experience from grown-up Ladies

With songs about death, adultery and domestic bliss, *Maroon* (Reprise/Warner) proves the Barenaked Ladies have graduated from callow cleverness to grown-up depth. Produced by Don Was with a crisp and uncluttered sound that echoes classic recordings of the 1960s, it is also the band's most appealing release to date. Songwriters Steven Page and Ed Robertson, drawing on influences ranging from the Beatles and Burt Bacharach to Elvis Costello and Gilbert and Sullivan, mix weighty matters and witty wordplay with a musical palette rich in shades of blue, grey and, yes, maroon.

The album opens with the brisk pop of *Too Little Too Late*, the first of several cautionary tales about self-doubt, inaction and ennui. The empty boasts of *Never Do Anything* are followed by the sleepy reveries of *Pinch Me*, which includes the closest thing to the fast rap that silver-tongued Robertson perfected on the band's massive 1998 hit *One Week*—which probably explains why the group's record label has issued it as the first single. *Conventioneers* is a gem of a song about the guilty pleasure of an office fling set to languid lounge music, and the country twang of *Go Home* recalls the unbridled joy of the Beatles' *I've Just Seen a Face*. Meanwhile *Sell Sell Sell*, a comically operatic number about a TV-commercial actor, echoes the plot of Barry Levinson's film *Wag the Dog*, with such pithy lines as "a movie's made, a war is won" and "the new Iraq gets more irate."



Offbeat lyrics, especially those written by Page, have always been among the Ladies' most notable features. *Maroon* contains its fair share of unusual rhymes ("vexed" with "hexed" and "sex") and pairings ("flummoxed and flushed"). And one song, *Off the Hook*, gives new meaning to the phrase "shaken not stirred." But for the first time in the band's decade-long career, the lyrics are integral parts of wholly crafted songs, not just gimmicky throwaway lines. The album's best numbers are those, like the war-zone-set *Helicopters* and the Cronenbergian car crash of *Tonight Is the Night I Fell Asleep at the Wheel*, that manage to distil complex human issues into nifty four-minute pop tunes. And that's a long way from the ditties about Grade 9 and Kraft Dinner for which the Ladies used to be known.

Nicholas Jennings

accident and it was a violent, probably pretty sudden thing," he says. "I've often wondered whether he had a few seconds to look around and go, 'Wow, I'm screwed.' The song really isn't about death, it's about the cinematography of the moment." With other songs on *Maroon* dealing with romance and unfulfilled promise, does that make the latest Ladies' offering more mature? "I'd prefer to use the term 'more adult,'" jokes Robertson, "because it links back to the porn thing. But this album is definitely for mature audiences only."

Surprisingly, the Ladies are far from bitter about the burnout and backlash in the mid-'90s that saw them plummet in Canada from pop-music darlings to virtual has-beens. "We eat our own," says Robertson. "Success is often frowned upon in this country." But he also concedes that the band had overexposed itself. "We were in every newspaper and all over MuchMusic and radio for two years straight. And we were partly to blame for that, because all we did was mug and goof around for the camera. People just finally went 'Enough already!'" Myers has another theory for the backlash.

The Ladies are 'still making wisecracks, but they're much wiser'



Page (left), Priestley capturing the news that *One Week* had hit No. 1

Pierre Breguy/Maclean's

"They wore shorts—there, I said it. Thank God for Terry." He is referring to Terry McBride, Sarah McLachlan's Vancouver-based manager, who took over the Ladies' faltering career in 1995 (Pierre Tremblay is now co-managing the band). "He didn't tell them what to wear or not to wear, but he told them what he really thought. And he explained why the band was having a credibility problem."

Will fans accept a more tailored, serious version of the Ladies? Myers admits that is the challenge for the band. "Jerry Lewis and Milton Berle had to play really nasty characters on TV because people only knew them as goofs. The Ladies are what they look like—really nice guys. But they're not always happy and they have their moods just like the rest of us. I hope people will accept their darker material along with the light stuff. After all, the Beatles always had a song like *Yellow Submarine* on the same album as *Eleanor Rigby*."

A huge thrill for Page during the making of the album was getting to meet his Beach Boy hero, Brian Wilson, the subject of one of his best-known songs. Wilson had performed—and recorded—the Ladies tune himself during his recent tour. Producer Don Was arranged to have Wilson drop by the studio—coincidentally the same one where the Beach Boys had made *Pet Sounds*—and play the Ladies a tape. Page had to pinch himself several times during the encounter with the pop genius. "I couldn't believe I was hearing our song about him being sung by him," he says. "And there he was sitting next to us, listening to it with us. After the tape finished, he goes, 'Is that cool, fellas?' And all I could manage to say was 'Yup, that's pretty cool.'" Cool and triumphant. M

Jason goes Barenaked

Jason Priestley and members of the Barenaked Ladies have often felt that, like Rodney Dangerfield, they "get no respect." But the Vancouver-born actor and the Toronto musicians, all good friends, have something else in common—they don't let it bug them. "Jason's loud and funny," says Steven Page of the Ladies. "He knows what people think of him and he doesn't care. That is exactly like our band." Even after a strong performance in the 1998 film *Love and Death on Long Island* and his success this year as Clifford in the London production of the play *Side Man*, Priestley, 32, is still perceived as a teen heartthrob from playing pretty boy Brandon Walsh on the TV show *Beverly Hills 90210*. And the Barenaked Ladies, despite their current success, accept that to many back home they are still goofballs.

That shared stoicism in the face of disregard made the actor—who had already directed episodes of *90210* and one Ladies video—a natural to film the band on their 1998 U.S. tour. Priestley was able to fashion his documentary, *Barenaked in America*, in the band's image—think *This Is Spinal Tap* meets *National Lampoon's Vacation*. But in the midst of all the clowning, a bona fide historic moment fell into their laps: the band got news that their single *One Week* had hit No. 1 on the *Billboard* chart. "What a wonderful time in a band's life to actually get to document," says Priestley, "especially a band that has been working so hard for so long."

Priestley became friends with the band in 1993. One night during dinner, the Ladies complained to Priestley about the cost of their disappointing latest video. Priestley offered to shoot their next one on the cheap, in Toronto, with their input. The outcome was *The Old Apartment*, which the band loved.

This week, Priestley will leave the London set of *The Fourth Angel*, an action movie with Jeremy Irons and Forest Whitaker, to join the Ladies in New York for the *Barenaked in America* premiere. "I don't think it's a coincidence that the film is coming out at the same time as the new CD," laughs Priestley. And speaking of *Maroon*, he doesn't understand why no one has sent him a copy. It seems he still gets no respect.

Shanda Deziel

A thicket of backwoods evil

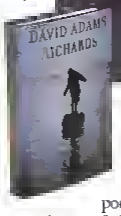
David Adams Richards soars in his new novel

Mercy Among the Children
By David Adams Richards
(Doubleday, 371 pages, $32.95)



The author: prose of uncanny strength

Rick Gerard/Saint John Telegraph-Journal



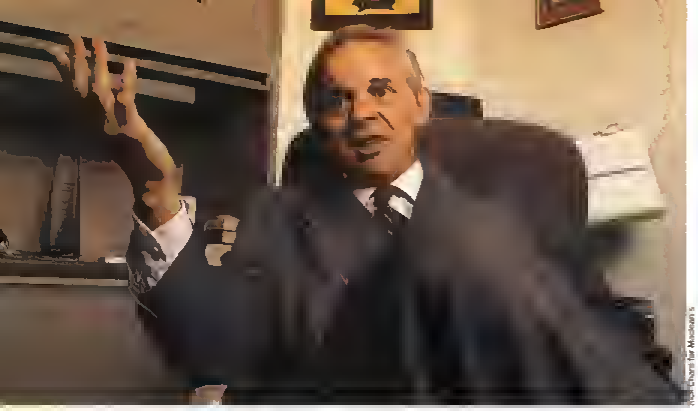
It's a wonderful thing to see a novelist swimming successfully against the tides of literary fashion. For many decades, most fiction writers have favoured a kind of ironic nihilism, coolly chronicling the foibles and struggles of an age of doubt. New Brunswick-born novelist David Adams Richards has clung to a different view. For more than 20 years, in novels such as *Nights Below Station Street* and *For Those Who Hunt the Wounded Down*, Richards has explored the idea that reality has an underlying moral structure. He writes of good and evil and human freedom to choose between them with an intensity of belief that puts him squarely in the tradition of his literary heroes, including Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. Yet he pursues these themes with an entirely modern sense of how fluid human life can be. It's as if he's taken the fleeting waters of his beloved Miramichi River as a template for the shifting fortunes of his characters. And in his 10th novel, *Mercy Among the Children*, he captures both their moral struggles and their rootless modernity with an originality and profundity that make this work his supreme achievement.

Like most of Richards' tales, *Mercy* is set in his native northeastern corner of New Brunswick, where fabulous salmon rivers braid their way through dense bush, towards estuaries polluted by pulp mills. On a tributary of the Miramichi called Arron Brook live the Hendersons, an extremely poor but dignified family of five. The father of this little clan, Sydney Henderson, has taken a vow (the result of a boyhood quarrel) never to raise his fist or voice against another in anger. He is almost Christ-like in his tolerance of the evil that comes his way. And a great deal comes his way, for people seem to hate him for his very goodness. He is blamed for crimes he has not committed, including the tragic death of a handicapped boy. But no matter what the provocation—Richards has drawn a tremendous scene in which Sydney is cruelly bullied by a policeman who wants him to confess—he refuses to defend himself, even verbally; he believes that evildoers ultimately indict and condemn themselves.

Sydney's passivism is anathema to his son Lyle, the novel's narrator. Lyle spends his boyhood in a state of fury, not just against his father's enemies, but against his own (as he sees him) cowardly parent. As he comes of age, Lyle turns to the ultimately hollow satisfactions of violent revenge. And so Richards establishes a great debate between two immemorial poles of human behaviour. It's a debate of unexpectedly moving power, raging not only through Sydney and Lyle, but in many of the novel's most richly drawn characters. Mat Pit—the latest in Richards' series of quasi-heroic backwoods outlaws—is the malevolent force behind many of the Hendersons' trials. Yet even he recognizes, however dimly, a kind of moral code, though like many others in the story he is fatally prone to mistaking public opinion for truth.

Mercy has its flaws. Its treatment of Sydney's saintly wife, Elly, and their two younger children, Autumn and Percy, sometimes slips into sentimentality. And Richards' familiar ranting against academics and social workers spoils a few passages. But these things are trivial in the face of the book's riches—including its poetic evocation of the moods of rural New Brunswick. What other Canadian writer would think of describing a creek's "laconic deep current"? What other novelist writes in a prose style of such knobby, uncanny, almost off-hand strength? And who else can so well catch the pettiness and misery of the criminal mind, or the melancholy of a child's longing for an absent parent, or the beauty and loneliness of the search for moral truth? *Mercy Among the Children* is a masterpiece.

John Bemrose



Books

Konkel's law

Konkel, characters who struggle but don't necessarily succeed

There is a smooth plot transition in Chuck Konkel's new thriller, *Evil Never Sleeps*, in which Mexican police officer Miguel Fuentes recognizes a connection between two characters by the merest hint of a look between them, "a metered expression of social acquaintance." A core skill for a cop, agrees the author, who in his day job is Staff Sgt. K. G. E. (Kazimierz Gerard Edward) Konkel, a high-ranking Toronto police officer with a highly unusual résumé. "I arrested someone in Hong Kong, one of my first heroin busts," recalls Konkel, 49, of his time in the former Crown colony's police force, "just on the look in his eye as he passed me."

Fuentes' deduction is the sort of detail that gives *Evil Never Sleeps* (HarperCollins, $33) its thread of gritty authenticity. A cop's life and a cop's attitude are woven right through its page-turning plot—even if, as Konkel insists, the character who says politicians have "dog piss for brains" is speaking entirely for himself. Konkel's police experience, coupled with a gift for vivid imagery, turns his tale of corruption, murder and an attempted coup d'état in contemporary Mexico into a high-octane thriller. Not that the author provides any inside information on actual crimes or the inner working of the *federales*, the Mexican national police. For one thing, he doesn't have any. His work against international crime has taken him to Eastern Europe as well as Asia, but not to Latin America. Besides, the whole point of writing fiction, Konkel laughs, "is that the plot can go as far as your imagination can take you," making it a relief from police work, which "always asks you to *prove* it."

Evil Never Sleeps is the story of Miguel Fuentes, a police officer of such integrity, so much an "altar boy"—as Konkel, a practising Roman Catholic, refers to dedicated cops—that it is surprising he hasn't been murdered. Instead, it's his career that has flat-lined. The once up-and-coming Mexico City officer came too close to exposing official corruption. For his sins, Fuentes is in exile as the novel opens, the chief of a tiny force of incompetent bribe-takers in a Sonora desert town. "I like characters who struggle with crises with integrity, and who don't necessarily succeed," explains Konkel, who isn't much interested in happy endings for his quixotic heroes. When an explosion destroys a local motel, Fuentes' dogged investigation sets off a trail of carnage that kills off almost every character—good, bad and animal.

> A cop's life and attitude are woven right through the thriller's page-turning plot

Fuentes' downward spiral bears little resemblance to Konkel's own career path. Born in Rotterdam, Netherlands, to a Polish Second World War veteran and his Dutch schoolteacher wife, Konkel immigrated to Hamilton with his parents in the mid-1950s. Although he left there in 1974, he retains a strong loyalty to his beloved Ticats football team. On Canada Day, 1999, having entered the winning bid in a charity auction, he was the team's coach-for-a-day. Konkel proudly displays the game ball from that match in his office at Toronto police headquarters, along with artwork by his nine-year-old daughter, Laura, and such career mementoes as an order of merit award from the Senate.

Konkel left Hamilton to go to Hong Kong, an experience that changed his life. "I couldn't find a job after I finished my MA in international relations," he says. "Then I saw an ad where the Royal Hong Kong Police were looking for university-trained applicants." His time there gave him a vocation, another language—Cantonese—to add to an already impressive collection (Dutch, Polish, French and German), and material for his first novel. Returning to Canada in 1977—two years before he married automotive entrepreneur Robin Devine—Konkel spent four years writing *The Glorious East Wind* late at night after completing his shifts as a Toronto constable.

The thriller came out to good reviews and strong sales in 1987, but Konkel essentially abandoned writing for a decade. "My daughter was born," he says simply, "and raising her seemed more important than any sequel." But now, Konkel is ready to do fictional battle against evil again. His next novel, he says, will be set in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, and his hero will take on Nazis, Soviets *and* the Western Allies. As quixotic as ever.

Brian Bethune

Films

Baron of laughs

This funny guy happens to be a nobleman



By Brian D. Johnson

Christopher Guest is not kidding about the ermine robe. "I used to wear it in the House of Lords," he says, "until they kicked out the hereditary peers—now it's in the closet." It's one thing to sit across from this mild-mannered, conservatively dressed American with no discernible sense of humour and picture him as English guitar legend Nigel Tufnel of Spinal Tap, the mock metal band whose amplifiers all go up to 11. It's quite another to imagine him sitting in the House of Lords, a stone's throw from the Queen. But that's where Guest—Fifth Baron Haden-Guest of Saling—found himself at the opening of Britain's Parliament last year, with his wife, Baroness Lady Haden-Guest—better known as Jamie Lee Curtis—at his side.

Will the real Christopher Guest please stand up? This chameleon performer appeared in multiple guises on *Saturday Night Live* in the mid-1980s. Most famously, he starred as Nigel in *This Is Spinal Tap* (1984), Rob Reiner's timeless rock 'n' roll "mockumentary," which was re-released in theatres and on DVD last week—and he continues to perform concerts in character with the band. In *Waiting for Guffman* (1996), which Guest directed, he sashayed through a small-town theatre troupe as Off-Off Broadway director Corky St. Clair. And now, in the purebred parody *Best in Show*, which he also directed, Guest appears as Harlan Pepper, a fishing shop owner with a southern drawl and a prize bloodhound on the leash.

Recruiting *SCTV* alumni Eugene Levy and Catherine O'Hara for both *Guffman* and *Best in Show*, Guest is keeping a Canadian comic legacy alive. And his own identity is so elusive he could qualify as an honorary Canadian. Born in New York City, the 52-year-old actor inherited his peerage from his father, Lord Haden-Guest. "Because of some accident of lineage, I got to sit with the Queen in this robe that has been handed down through my family," Guest told *Maclean's* after *Best in Show*'s recent première at the Toronto film festival. "It feels as if you're in a movie. It's as surreal as the Spinal Tap thing, which is awfully surreal. I have an identity where I can go out and play in front of 50,000 people. I can be a rock star pretty much at will, not to be arrogant about it." Earlier this month Spinal Tap shared a bill with Bonnie Raitt, Ry Cooder, The Byrds and Jackson Browne. "And they're the ones coming to *our* dressing room with things for us to sign."

Guest's creative process is as idiosyncratic as the characters he plays. He co-wrote the basic scenarios for *Guffman* and *Best in Show* with Levy, but all the dialogue was improvised on camera. Levy recalls that the first day he walked onto the set of *Guffman*, he was shocked when Guest just started shooting with no rehearsal. Guest and *Best in Show* co-star Michael McKean (*Spinal Tap* singer David St. Hubbins) "are geniuses in this kind of thing," says Levy, 53. "They can turn it on and off like a tap. For me, it's exhilarating and kind of scary. The balance is, get the laughs but also be good enough to get the audience emotionally involved. It's a fine line between how well you improvise and how competent a character actor you are." Or, to quote *Spinal Tap*, "It's a fine line between stupid and clever."

Best in Show, a mockumentary about contestants at a national dog show, is a funnier, more broadly appealing movie than *Waiting for Guffman*. With O'Hara cast as his over-sexed wife, Levy portrays menswear salesman Gerry Fleck, a nerd who has two left feet—literally—and gives the movie's most inspired performance.



Guest as Nigel Tufnel, in Best in Show *(left), 'edge'*

As for Guest, in one of his improvised solos his character sits behind the wheel and talks about how he likes to pass the time by listing names of nuts. But after "peanut" and "pistachio," Guest realized he didn't *know* that many nuts. "Here's this American driving through the country. I don't know where I'm going and I can't name more than five or six nuts. This was an example of being right on the edge."

A fine line indeed.

Going out a winner



Fox' characteristic grace and a nine-year-long struggle

His stuff gait, and the way he fumbled for the notes to his acceptance speech, betrayed the fact that he has Parkinson's disease. But Michael J. Fox showed characteristic grace on Sept. 10 as he accepted his fourth Emmy Award to a standing ovation. Edmonton-born Fox, 39, took the prize for best actor in a comedy series for his role on *Spin City*, a show he quit last spring to fight the nervous-system disorder. Fox thanked "my family in Canada," before expressing pride in his wife's nomination for a guest role in the cop drama *Law & Order*. "Tracey, I love you so much," the actor declared, his voice cracking. Four days later, in congressional testimony, Fox spoke about the battle with Parkinson's that he has waged since his 1991 diagnosis. But at the Emmys his only allusion to his nine-year struggle was to make it clear he hasn't given up. "It's been a great ride," he said. "Stay tuned."

Icing teen suicide

In the mid-1990s, choreographer Judith Marcuse became interested in the tumultuous inner life of teens while renting a high-school gym for her dance company, DanceArts Vancouver. The mother of a 16-year-old girl, she spent the next 2½ years in discussion groups with more than 300 kids, exploring their thoughts and feelings. Those sessions led her to collaborate with playwright John Lazarus on *Ice: Beyond Cool*, a raw, charged rock-theatre production dealing with teen suicide. The show was a hit when it was launched in the atrium of Vancouver's Pacific Centre Mall in October, 1997. Afterward, Marcuse was deluged with phone calls and letters from teens who credited *Ice* with stopping them from trying to kill themselves. Now, the show is set to begin an eight-city national tour starting in Ottawa on Sept. 27. All performances will be staged in teen-friendly venues such as malls. "The show is cathartic," Marcuse says, "because it's teens' own experiences in their own words."

In the eye of the beholder



Shin' tens of thousands

Most Canadians would blink twice if asked to name the anatomical feature that gives Far Eastern eyes their distinctive look (it's the epicanthic fold). But some people of North Asian descent, particularly young women, are all too keenly aware of it. Each year, tens of thousands of Asian North Americans undergo a surgery, called blepharoplasty, to create a crease in their eyelids, making their eyes appear larger, rounder—and more Caucasian. *Western Eyes*, a documentary by Korean-Canadian director Ann Shin that CBC Newsworld is airing on Oct. 3 and 7, follows two Asian-Canadian women as they contemplate, and one undergoes, the procedure. "I went into this with the idea that these women must be weak to cave in to Western ideals of beauty," says Shin, 32. "I came away with an appreciation of just how multilayered the issues are."

Pop Movies

1.	The Watcher (200/1)	$1 412 022
2	Bring It On (174/3)	$818 685
3	The Cell (164/4)	$705 445
4	Nurse Betty (78/1)	$624,328
5	The Art of War (186/3)	$553 769
6.	The Way of the Gun (116/1)	$428 582
7.	What Lies Beneath (128/8)	$386 102
8.	Highlander: Endgame (133/2)	$282 657
9.	Space Cowboys (124/6)	$282 663
10.	Gladiator (139/10)	$278 603

Top movies in Canada, ranked according to box office receipts during the seven days that ended on Sept. 14. (In brackets: number of screens / weeks showing.)

Source: Entertainment Data Inc.

Bayou G.I.s



Director Joel Schumacher is probably best known for his two *Batman* instalments. But with *Tigerland*, he abandons special effects to tell the story of a group of Vietnam War recruits. As they train in Tigerland, the swampy backwoods of Louisiana, their interpersonal tensions mirror those of the society at large.

National wealth

It was Canadian all right. Last week's two episodes of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire, Canadian Edition*, stumped contestants with such tricky national questions as where Ogopogo lives. (Not knowing the answer to that one—Lake Okanagan, B.C.—capped Quebecer François Dominic Laramee's winnings at a Canadian-record $64,000.) CTV racked up a record of its own for a Canadian entertainment production—an eye-popping 4.2 million viewers watched the first episode. Not surprisingly, the network immediately announced that *Millionaire* would become a series. But the best of the homegrown touches, at least for the competitors, was that Canadian law applied to their winnings—the money was all tax free.

The soldiers' story

Military experts have tended to attribute the Allied victory in the battle of Normandy, which ended on Aug. 21, 1944, to superior firepower. Allied troops, according to the scholarly consensus reported in *Victory at Falaise* (HarperCollins), were timid and ineffectual compared with their German counterparts. Those are fighting words for retired Canadian brigadier-general Denis Whitaker and his journalist wife, Shelagh, who interviewed scores of veterans from both sides for their book. The extraordinary personal accounts compiled by the Whitakers bring alive the vicious 76-day struggle that began on D-Day. Their conclusion: the campaign in the Norman *bocage*—thousands of tiny farm plots fenced by dense hedges that gave immense advantages to the defence—made for a First World War-style battle of attrition that was won by the courage and endurance of Allied infantry.



Best-Sellers

Fiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1	THE BLIND ASSASSIN, Margaret Atwood (3)	1
2.	THE BEAR AND THE DRAGON, Tom Clancy (4)	2
3	DEADLY DECISIONS, Kathy Reichs (7)	4
4.	WINTER SOLSTICE, Rosamunde Pilcher (5)	7
5.	ANIL'S GHOST, Michael Ondaatje (25)	3
6.	OPEN HOUSE, Elizabeth Berg (1)	
7	NO GREAT MISCHIEF, Alistair MacLeod (46)	5
8	THE FOREST, Edward Rutherfurd (20)	6
9	FAITH OF THE FALLEN, Terry Goodkind (1)	
10	WHEN WE WERE ORPHANS, Kazuo Ishiguro (16)	8

Nonfiction

1	FIVE DAYS IN LONDON, John Lukacs (34)	3
2.	WILD STONE HEART, Sharon Butala (4)	1
3.	IN A SUNBURNED COUNTRY, Bill Bryson (14)	2
4.	ONE GOOD TURN, Witold Rybczynski (1)	
5.	FROM DAWN TO DECADENCE, Jacques Barzun (7)	5
6.	STALKING THE ELEPHANT, James Lasdun (1)	
7.	HOW TO READ AND WHY, Harold Bloom (4)	6
8.	VICTORY AT FALAISE, Denis Whitaker and Shelagh Whitaker (2)	9
9	STAR-SPANGLED CANADIANS, Jeffrey Simpson (3)	7
10	LIFE ON THE OTHER SIDE, Sylvia Browne (1)	

() Weeks on list

Compiled by Brian Bethune

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Allan Fotheringham

The best cities of the world

There has been, in the elevator leading to the Top of the Mark in San Francisco—the best view in town—a sign. It stated, quite flatly, the six most beautiful cities in the world. They are Hong Kong, Vancouver, Cape Town, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney and, of course, San Francisco.

Now, if we're talking just plain beautiful, there is naturally no contest. Paris is first and every other place strands a poor second. But in this case we are talking sheer physical beauty—just the gifts that God in Her wisdom handed down, before humans began to muck up the scenery.

It is one of the unfortunate facts of a scribbler's life that my cruel employers insist on shipping this protesting body to various parts of the globe. That sign in the Top of the Mark has always stuck in my mind, and is the barometer used when checking out the contestants. The current hardship assignment, three weeks in Sydney for the Olympic Games, provides some disturbing evidence that the rankings may have to be revised.



Roy Peterson

My previous report card had Rio at the top, followed by Hong Kong and Vancouver in a tie for second. Cape Town, the real surprise, took fourth spot with Sydney and San Francisco trailing the pack—mainly on the grounds that neither one of them is gifted with mountains to complete the postcard view.

The forced confinement in exuberant Sydney is a sobering experience, in that its shameful lack of mountains may have to be forgiven. Its starring feature—aside from its one-and-only Opera House and the hulking Harbour Bridge—is the harbour itself, turning the principal city in this dry and dusty land into a waterbound delight. The harbour, with its many fjords and twists and turns every which way, has 240 km of shorefront.

San Francisco has its famous hills, with its even more famous cable cars, but its main charm is the laid-back tradition that produced not only Jack London and Joe DiMaggio, but campus revolutions and always the threat of another earthquake. San Francisco has all the cutting-edge attractiveness of California—Silicon Valley and all that—without the vulgarity of Los Angeles (O.J. and all that).

Cape Town, when you come to think of it, owes its stunning setting to just one feature: the hulking shadow of Table Mountain that towers over a very lovely city. Its leafy, flowered suburbs are as blissful as anything in Vancouver's more pricey enclaves. It's a hidden treasure among the globe's more pleasant cities, but not too many travellers get there.

Sydney (remindful of a younger New York in its brashness) has a neighbourhood called Kings Cross, not too far from the downtown towers, that the locals don't like to mention much. It is full of all the waifs and strays of society—out-of-work actors, old men with ruined faces, strip joints, betting parlours. Everything you wouldn't want your daughter to see. Prostitution is apparently legal in New South Wales (the budget for petty cash doesn't go that far). Kings Cross, in essence, is what makes Sydney so interesting.

Rio, damn its Latin heart, has that incomparable mixture of sea and cloud-shrouded mountains, Copacabana Beach challenged only by Sydney's Bondi. In raw physical splendour, we will still grant it top spot. Vancouver, as we know, has Stanley Park—but the dullard city fathers still can't figure out how to empty a three-lane bridge into it. Dig, you fools! Ever hear of a tunnel?

The most remarkable thing about Sydney, since the last visit several decades ago, is how it has boldly tackled the traffic problems of a metropolis of five million lucky inhabitants with that very solution: tunnel beneath the city core. Thus preserving its equivalent of New York's Central Park or Vancouver's Stanley greenery—a magnificent swath that sweeps all the way down to the harbour and that magical, irresistible Opera House. It is, as in London's three linked parks outside Buckingham Palace, part of "the lungs of the city." Hong Kong, yes, has that dazzling sight across to Victoria Peak, but one suspects the dazzlement is now the Technicolor towers that put modern Manhattan to shame.

But we're supposed to be talking just about physical beauty here. Dick Ebersol, the head honcho of the NBC bullies who have bought these games, now calls Sydney "the most beautiful city in the world." (Now he would, wouldn't he?) All I know is that you can take a fast 15-minute catamaran ferry to Watson's Bay, dine over scrumptious fish at the 115-year-old Doyle's family restaurant, where luscious homes line the cliffs. If you're a lawyer or stockbroker, you can live here and land via the cat within walking distance of your office—no $30-a-day Toronto underground parking fees.

Sydney is going rapidly up the global report card. Hey there, boss. I'm running out of cities.

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